The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

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OF RELIGION

Roy M. Pearson:

WHY PREACH?

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By Roy M. Pearson

DETERMINE WHY YOU ARE

PREACHING, I believe, is worth while. I believe that it is an act of untold opportunity and immeasurable good. But preaching has become an ecclesiastical habit. It has been a part of the church's life for so many uninterrupted centuries that it has never occurred to many people either to investigate its parentage or to justify its cost.

There are many valid reasons for preaching, and for the most part they fall into two main groups: (1) those held unconsciously and (2) those held consciously.

There is, for example, the motive of vanity, self-display, exhibitionism. Sometimes it is the voice which, unknowingly, we love to present to our people. We have been taken captive by the inner assurance that our vocal chords are bearers of blessing and that the delivery of words is synonymous with the achievement of preaching.

Superficial Motives

Sometimes it is the body which, unwittingly, we like to display in preaching. The luxuriant growth of gently waving hair. The massive head and huge shoulders. The soft and sympathetic eyes. Or even the sallow, frail, anemic aspect of face and of frame which a few misinformed parishioners may interpret as an evidence of special holiness.

Sometimes it is a poetical turn of mind. A gift for lovely language, for painting verbal pictures, for so speaking that the departing hearer will compare you with T. S. Eliot, Walt Whitman—or perhaps even Edgar Guest! The ability to obscure all of the sharp edges of life, to smother all of its violence, to dull all of its pain, and shedding a rosy glow on all the world make every sermon a sunset and every word a soft caress.

Or perhaps it is scholarship. We have a Ph.D., or we are graduates of Harvard, or we have taken a correspondence course on theology, or we have read a book. Without incurring the blame of pedantry, we want to win the praise of erudition. So we use long and unfamiliar words. We indulge in the jargon of some limited and provincial discipline.

And so it goes. Sometimes one of the unadmitted motives in preaching is the display of extensive travels, and we seem to overlook the fact that in Bethlehem were Boston, the greatest preacher in the world never got down to New York. Sometimes it is our famous friends—"on one of my camping trips with Albert Schweitzer" or "my old friend Winston Churchill"—and apparently we have not taught ourselves that God's vision is intensely selective and that in judging one man he does not see anyone else.

Of course, there is a fine line to be walked in this matter. The man with a resonant voice won't talk in a whisper nor will the preacher with an impressive presence put out one eye or walk with a limp. The crucial question concerns motives. If the asset is dedicated to the God revealed in Jesus Christ, the preaching *may* be good preaching. If it is dedicated to self-display, the preaching *can't* be good preaching.

Resolving Inner Conflicts

But self-display is not the only unsatisfactory motive for preaching which some men unconsciously hold. Without intending to do so, some preachers are using their sermons to work off their own inner conflicts. Their preaching is a ventilhole for the unproductive steam of their own disordered personalities. Preaching is their only release from tension and their only freedom from frustration.

Another motive for preaching which many men hold unawares is that of airing their own prejudices. We had a bad experience in the army ourselves, and hating the army we seize every chance to deride it. Or we loathe the pacifists, and we spend sermon after sermon describing Jesus' violence toward the Pharisees and pointing out how he drove the money-changers out of the Temple. Perhaps we fancy ourselves as storytellers, and month after month we preach dramatic or biographical sermons. We may be obsessed with the loneliness of our people, or with their ignorance, or with their sinfulness, or with their indifference. We may be crusaders for the Negroes or the Democratic Party or the United Nations. The

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PREACHING

specific prejudice or purpose is not of major consequence. The important issue is that we have put ourselves in the place of the gospel and that we are not aware of what we have done.

Finally among these unconscious motives for preaching is entertainment. Because every minister knows that his case will not be heard if the pews in his church are empty, he tries so to preach on any given Sunday that those present then will want to return on the following Sunday. Thus phrased, the procedure is scarcely open to debate, but in claiming that we want to be effective for Christ we do not always realize how much of our own pride is involved. We don't like to admit how earnestly we long to be popular, to be known as a great preacher, to send the people home happy. Unintentionally we have put ourselves in the same category with Bob Hope and Milton Berle: we know that either we go over, or we go out.

Inadequate Motives

But the unsatisfactory reasons for preaching are not limited to those unconsciously held. Many men preach frequent or occasional sermons for reasons of which they are fully aware but which still have no proper place in the preaching ministry.

Some ministers, for example, set out to give their people instruction in philosophy. They are impatient with the provincialism of their flocks, with their ignorance of the great ideas of the ages, with their willingness to be happy and yet not know how to describe their happiness in logical terms. So they lecture to their people about Plato and Aristotle.

Other men use the pulpit for instruction in psychology. They tell their people why they act the way they do and why they should or shouldn't. They tell them how to get rid of their inferiority complexes, what to do with their anxieties, how to deal with their anger, insecurity or jealousy. The pulpit becomes a clinic, and the minister appears unhappy if he looks around the church and cannot find a phobia.

And then some men use their preaching to further the ends of social action. Claiming rightly that the gospel is meaningless if not incarnate, they assume wrongly that the gospel is coterminous with its political or economic implications. Belonging to the spiritual mobilization program, they are always attacking the labor unions. Or fired by some article in *Social Action,* they heap coals of fire on the National Association of Manufacturers. Or they plead the cause of a public health program or morality in government or prohibition.

Still further, there are preachers whose motive in preaching is to give their people what they want. Having wealthy people in their congregations, they steer wide of any comments critical of the capitalistic system. Knowing that their people are "fed up with all this talk about war," they never even hint that Christian people ought to be concerned when millions of men are killing one another. Noting how the compliments roll in when their sermons have brought sweetness and light, they become "peace-of-mind preachers" and discover too late that by trying to avoid discomfort, this method ends up in nausea.

The Pastor's Clear Duty

Equally dangerous, however, are the men who try to give their congregations what they *don't* want. Nobody denies that a congregation always comfortable will be a congregation seldom Christian, but it is equally true that a congregation always in torment knows little of the God revealed in Jesus Christ. To proclaim the stern, unwanted truth is sometimes a preacher's clear duty, but if his sermons never have a place for ends and aims to which the intelligent and loyal groups in his church can subscribe as fully as he can himself, he probably needs to re-examine his commission.

Such, then, are some of the inadequate motives for preaching which many men consciously hold, and their fallacy is not so often that they are evil as that their use is out of proportion to their importance for the Christian gospel. It is not so much that they are wrong as that they are often out of place: they are like a lecture on butterflies at a meeting of the Steamfitters Union.

And so the trees are down, and having cleared the fields of the scrub growth of unsatisfactory reasons for preaching, we can see more quickly what our solid purpose really is. The real reason for preaching is the telling of a gospel. It is the proclamation of good news which is news only in the sense that so many people have chosen not to hear its old, old story. It could be rightly said that one of the principal concerns of the preacher is the avoidance of a single word that is new, a single idea that is novel, a single thought which might be considered up to date or modern. In the message of the Christian pulpit anything new is an unwarranted intrusion. Our word is Christ, and Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Good News and Changed Lives

No pulpit was rightly built as a means to the minister's livelihood or self-expression. No pulpit was rightly built as a lecture platform. Among all the items in a church's furniture, the pulpit is one of the most sacred because the pulpit does not belong to man but to God. It is meant to be God's lips and tongue and throat—the means by which

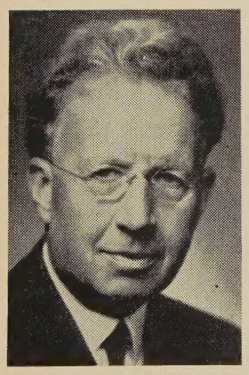
the word of God is rendered audible to mortal man. When a preacher steps into the pulpit in full consciousness of the deed he is called to do, he surrenders his own freedom. He becomes a captive of God's will, and what he says is not his own but Christ's.

We are therefore heralds, witnesses, proclaimers, announcers, messengers; and one of our biggest tasks is that of decreasing the friction as our message passes from him who sent us through ourselves and on to those to whom we are sent. Any good minister will often be impatient—even disgusted—with himself. He will wish that he could kick himself out of the pulpit and let God stand there in his place. He will long to be more transparent and will wish for nothing quite so much as that increasingly his people may think not of him but of the God whose halting messenger he is and of the Christ whose name he bears.

Henry Ward Beecher once said that "a sermon is not like a Chinese firecracker, to be fired off for the noise which it makes. It is the hunter's gun, and at every discharge he should look to see his game fall." All good preaching is not just bearing witness but bearing witness for a purpose. It is preaching for a verdict. It is preaching for widened understanding, deepened resolves, changed lives.

It was said of the chief priests and the Pharisees that when they heard Jesus speak, they "perceived that he was speaking about them." Any preaching which does not result in that conviction is preaching which has failed. The mother tired and weary, the college student contemplating fornication, the man thinking about suicide, the people whose energies have never been harnessed and whose sins have never been forgiven and whose wounds have never been healed—they perceive that we speak to them or we might as well have stayed in bed. They know that Christ is for them or our preaching is an impertinence. They are quickened, humbled, comforted, inspired, or our preaching has not done the job which it was meant to do.

For it is our purpose in preaching so to proclaim the gospel of the God revealed in Jesus Christ that the heathen may be made Christian and the Christian Christlike.



A Sermon for Reformation Sunday

Positive Protestantism

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

ON October 31, 437 years ago, Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the church door in Wittenberg. He did not foresee the consequences. Years afterward he exclaimed, "Had I known all in advance, God would have been put to great trouble to bring me to it"; and, thinking especially of the Diet of Worms where he confronted the emperor, he said, "Truly God can drive one mad; I do not know whether now I could be so daring." Like Columbus, who had discovered America only a quarter century earlier, Luther sailed out on an unknown sea, not sure whither he went, and like Columbus he discovered a whole new world.

Fellow Protestants, we need to remember those days when it took audacity and courage to be a Protestant. Today 250,000 of our congregations cover this nation. Of all American members of religious bodies in the United States, we constitute 59 per cent. Once to be a Protestant meant ecclesiastical excommunication, social ostracism, often cruel martyrdom. Not now! Now being a Protestant can be part of a good citizen's conventional, easygoing respectability. Multitudes of our members find Protestantism so easy that they are no longer really *Protestants*. They have lost the dynamic meaning of their heritage. They have surrendered the spirit of the great tradition.

Head of the Church

If Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox and their fellow pioneers could speak to us today, what would they say? Surely, they would turn our faces forward, would point out our uncompleted tasks, would condemn our soft contentment, and would challenge us once more in church and in society to be reformers. That is, they would make Protestantism difficult again, hazardous, calling for courage, venturesomeness, dedication.

It is that note I wish to strike today. Too much of our Protestantism is negative—a protest against something. We need a revival of *positive* Protes-

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tantism; and every essential element in our historic teaching, so it seems to me, should contribute to it.

First, those early Protestants, with all their differences, said one thing unanimously: that Christ is the sole head of the church. At first they did not dream of seceding from the Roman communion. They wanted not to divide it but to reform it. All their spiritual traditions were in the Roman Church, and their accustomed loyalties belonged to her. In a wide area of common agreement, Roman Catholics and Protestants from the Reformers on have been as one. Protestants and Roman Catholics alike agree that God is Creator of the universe and Father of our souls; that Christ is our divine Lord and Redeemer; that the church is the body of Christ and the sustaining fellowship of believers; that the Bible is the revelation of God's will; that Christian character is the good fruit which should grow on a good tree! What a pity that with such fundamental agreements Roman Catholicism and Protestantism had to split!

But at least one factor in Romanism the early Protestants could not accept. Pope Leo XI stated it plainly in 1928: "All true followers of Christ will believe . . . the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff . . . with the same faith as they believe the Incarnation of Our Lord." Facing that claim in their day, the Reformers dug in heels. Christ was the sole head of the church, they said.

Protestants still say that, but see how commonly we emphasize its negative side! We believe in no infallible papacy—period! But what about the positive affirmation—that Christ is the sole head of the church? That is a momentous avowal. If that is true, then our work has hardly started.

Salvation through Faith

Consider a second factor in the faith of the Reformation: that every soul has direct access to God. Roman Catholics, at their best, also say that; all their mystics would say it; but the Reformers faced in Romanism a vast popular system of intermediaries—saints, angels, Mary, the mother of our Lord—through whom God must be approached and by whose intercessions prayers become effective. There, too, the early Protestants, at the risk of their lives, said No!

Well, we too say No! It is easy for us to say No! We deny that whole system of intermediaries between our souls and God, and that negative denial costs us mighty little. But see the positive conviction which we are supposed to be standing for, and which we so easily forget! Every soul has immediate access to God—that is Protestant doctrine and it is a momentous affirmation.

On Reformation Sunday, let us not forget what that doctrine of immediate divine-human encounter meant to those first Reformers. Said Luther, with his life at stake: "To go against conscience is neither safe nor right: here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. God help me! Amen." That is positive Protestantism, and, if we really believed it, we would be indeed a dynamic, forward-looking movement.

What I am trying to say here is just what John Robinson said to the Pilgrims in 1620 before they sailed on the Mayflower. Edward Winslow heard him, and reported the sermon:

> He was very confident the Lord had more truth and light yet to breake forth out of his holy Word. He took occasion also miserably to bewaile the state and condition of the Reformed churches, who were come to a period in Religion, and would goe no further than the instruments of their Reformation: As, for example, the *Lutherans* they could not be drawne to goe beyond what Luther saw, for whatever part of God's will he had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will rether die than embrace it. And so also, saith he, you see the Calvinists, they stick where he left them: A misery much to be lamented; For though they were precious shining lights in their times, yet God had not revealed his whole will to them: And were they now living, saith hee, they would be as ready and willing to embrace further light, as that they had received.

My friends, that is honest-to-goodness Protestantism, a dynamic, forward-looking movement, with God's challenge immediately audible in dedicated souls.

Scriptural Authority

Or consider a third element in the faith of the first Reformers—the Bible as the norm of their beliefs and the guide of their lives. Not to the papacy but to the Book they turned for authority, with freedom for each individual to read and interpret the Book. Well, we say that too, but how commonly we miss its positive meaning! It is easy for us Protestants to deny the authority of the papacy, but to affirm the leadership of the Bible—my soul! that ought to wake us up and set us moving.

To be sure, there are forms of literalistic biblicism which chain men's minds to temporary ways of thinking current in ancient times, but the Bible at its heart is the most forward-looking book in the world. The eternal purpose which God purposed in Christ—is that behind us only or ahead of us, too? The Sermon on the Mount—is that a past achievement or a future goal? Think of the great prophets and their vision of a world where men shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks and learn war no more! Think of our Lord with his commission: "Go into all the world!"

I am pleading today for positive Protestantism. I am fed up with negative Protestantism. I looked in the dictionary the other day to see what it thought a Protestant is, and read this: "Protestant: Any Western Christian who is not an adherent of the Roman Catholic Church." So, that is the way we have impressed the lexicographers. They define us in terms of what we are *not*. We are

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thought of as those who merely protest against something. But when the word Protestant first was used in Elizabethan English it meant not merely making a *protest,* but making a *protestation,* an affirmation, a positive avowal, a statement of flaming conviction.

When Luther was still in his Augustinian monastery, struggling with his doubts, one of his Roman Catholic teachers said to him: "Brother Martin, let the Bible alone; read the old teachers. They give you the whole marrow of the Bible; reading the Bible simply breeds unrest." Well, I'll say it breeds unrest! It challenges conscience, it upsets complacency, it calls to repentance, it opens doors to personal and social transformation.

Basic Doctrine

Or, just once more in this area of our thought, consider the *basic* doctrine of Protestantism: justification by faith. That is where Luther started. He had grown up relying on a vast apparatus of ritual observances—auricular confession, priestly pardon, the mass, veneration of saints, indulgencies, pilgrimages—an intricate system of sacred works; and, despite endless fidelity in their performance, Luther's soul was still starved and he knew no salvation. Then the light broke. He by-passed that whole external paraphernalia and by faith opened his heart to the immediately available, redeeming, transforming grace of God. That is where the Reformation started—not so much in a protest against something as in a positive experience, a vital, saving, personal conversion.

Well, it's obvious, isn't it? that it is a lot easier to be a Protestant by not believing in auricular confession, priestly pardon and all the rest, than it is to be a Protestant by sharing even a little Luther's profound experience of God's transforming grace. That experience liberated Luther, freed him from his guilt and fear, released his spirit's powers and sent him out with an affirmative evangelical gospel that all Christians can be kings and priests before God.

Personal Challenge

Reformation Sunday is more than a historic celebration. It is a personal challenge to each of us. Here we are—Christians, supposedly believing that Christ is the sole head of the church, that every soul can have direct access to God, that the Bible is our inspired guide, and that God's grace, immediately experienced, can redeem us from sin and send us out free men and women to help transform the world. There is nothing negative about that. That is positive Protestantism.

This being so, we face now some of the practical consequences it should issue in.

First, let positive Protestantism, in every area where cooperation is possible, cooperate with Roman Catholicism. I am as far from being a Roman Catholic as anybody here, but still I say, for the sake of our nation and the world, let the best in Protestantism do everything possible to cooperate with the best in Roman Catholicism. The points of conflict between us are many and obvious, and today they are acrimoniously stressed. We will not have an American ambassador at the Vatican—but there are strong Roman Catholic voices in the United States which agree with that. We will not have public funds used for the support of private and parochial schools, whether Protestant or Catholic—but many Romanists affirm that too. Roman Catholicism is not nearly so monolithic and unanimous as many think it is. Despite the infallibilities that Roman Catholics may not deny, there are endless differences among them about policies, strategies and even teachings.

Rufus Jones, the Quaker, once asked a distinguished Roman prelate: "I should like to know what you would say if you met a person who plainly possessed grace in his life, and yet had never used what your church calls *the means of grace.*" And the prelate answered: "I should say that that person belonged to the invisible church, and that *that* is even more important than belonging to the visible church."

Protestant Cooperation

A second factor in the program of positive Protestantism is the ecumenical movement—our determination to overpass the shocking and generally trivial divisions that split us into sects, and to achieve increasing unity.

Many people picture Protestantism as beginning in unity and then dividing into sects. The fact is that the revolt against the Roman Church exploded in many different places and forms so that, from the beginning, the Reformers with anguish of heart tried vainly to achieve unity. In 1552 John Calvin wrote a letter to Archbishop Cranmer in England, in which he said: "Among the greatest evils of our time must be counted the fact that the churches are so disunited. So far as I am concerned, if I can do anything to help, I shall not hesitate to cross ten seas to serve this cause."

Well, how would he feel now with 256 different Protestant churches in the United States? To be sure, 95 per cent of our American Protestants are in only 14 denominations, but, while that mitigates the situation, it is nothing to be satisfied with. My friends, this is the age-old problem of Protestantism—disunity. The factors which have encouraged these endless divisions are obvious: the individual's right of private judgment as to what the Bible means; the achievement of civil and religious liberty so that diverse opinions can be freely expressed and organized; the fallacious idea that a church, to be a church, must be made up of people who unanimously agree about doctrine. These three factors, joined with the original disunity of the Protestant movement, have perpetuated and complicated this most perilous problem in our movement. And now the critical hour has struck when, if Protestants are to move forward, they must move together.

If anyone here thinks of this present-day determination to achieve unity as something new and

modern, he should read Protestant history. Listen to this! Who do you suppose said it? "Cease, my dear friends, to cling to these party names and distinctions; away with them all; let us call ourselves only 'Christians' after him from whom our doctrine comes." Martin Luther said that.

Or listen to this: "Would to God that all party names and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world were forgotten; and that we might all agree to sit down together as humble, loving disciples at the feet of a common Master, to hear his word, imbibe his spirit, and transcribe his life in our own." John Wesley said that.

Gospel of Redeeming Power

Or, listen to this: "I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. I hope the 'Baptist' name will soon perish, but let Christ's last forever!" Charles H. Spurgeon, one of the foremost leaders in Baptist history, said that.

All that we have said so far heads up in our conclusion. Let us, so far as we can, cooperate with the best in Roman Catholicism—yes! Let us amalgamate our divided forces and achieve a new unity that will give us strength—yes! But let us do this because we have taken the realistic measure of our desperate generation and its tragic needs! Never in history has mankind needed more an evangelical gospel of redeeming power for the individual and a resounding proclamation of the Christian ethic for personal and social life.

I am an old man now. For seventy-five years I have watched my generation try to save itself by scientific means. Certainly it has achieved wonders. A little town, named Boston, twenty miles south of Buffalo, New York, was founded by the Fosdicks. A house still stands there, the original portion of which was a log cabin. My great-grandfather built that cabin and my grandfather, whom I vividly remember, lived there as a boy. In all the world then there was no such thing as a railroad or a telephone or a telegraph. There were no matches to light fires with or gas or coal ranges to light them in. There were no elevators or refrigerators, no plumbing, no electric lights, no sewing machines, no furnaces. Letters were written with quill pens, because steel pens had not been invented, and were dried with sand because blotting paper did not exist. There were no victrolas, radios, typewriters, bicycles, automobiles, airplanes, no television, no atom bomb.

Science Not Enough

Standing in that house which sheltered the boyhood of a man whom I intimately knew, I have felt afresh with what absorbed preoccupation during three generations we have been engaged in trying to solve our problems and save ourselves and our societies by inventive science. But now look at the world! Power, power in our hands such as mankind never before possessed, but see what we are doing with it! Fifty years ago Thomas Edison said, "What man's mind can create, man's character can control." Well, that is the "sixty-four dollar question" now. Can it? What we face today is the stupendous fact that while science can give us power, science alone cannot determine how we shall use it.

No! Science alone cannot save us. We desperately need the gospel for the transformation of our personal lives and the ethical reformation of our societies. Don't take it from me—take it from one of our outstanding scientists, Dr. Arthur Compton: "Science has created a world in which Christianity is an imperative." I should say so! Once more the ancient world resounds: What shall it profit to gain the whole world and lose the soul?

Fellow Protestants, that need calls for an evangelical gospel for the individual. Billy Sunday said once: "Sometimes God has to lay a man flat on his back to make him look up." Well, millions of men and women are flat on their backs today—in disillusionment, cynicism, skepticism and despair. Can we help them to look up—to find the divine grace that can redeem their lives, restore their faith and set them upon their feet?

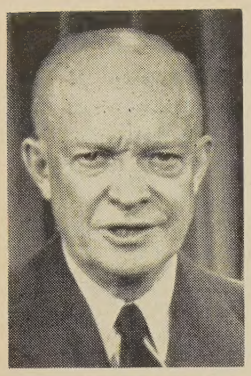
Power of the Gospel

Our desperate need calls for the social gospel, too. Grant all the decency in American life—lovely homes, upright characters, loyal public servants, unpurchasable honesty in business and rectitude in government—nevertheless, during these recent years rank, unprincipled rascality has been revealed among us. In heaven's name, what has a negative, sectarian Protestantism to offer in the face of such moral need? But a positive Protestantism, united, really believing in Christ's leadership, organized from city councils to the World Council, could start a reformation that would make the first Protestant Reformers proud of their offspring.

In one of our communities a church building burned down and two neighbors found themselves standing side by side watching the blaze. Said one to the other: "This is the first time I ever saw you at church." Said the other, "This is the first time I ever saw the church on fire." That was the ideal of the first Reformers—a church afire with faith and dedication. That is the need of these momentous times.

Give Your Best

IT is an immortal thing to "give of your best to the Master." Your best may be different from your neighbor's best; it does not matter. The widow's mite of two pennies and Mary's costly gift were far apart outwardly, but Jesus evaluates the quality of the heart, which in the last analysis determines the final values of life. Christianity can never take its rightful place in the world's social order on any level lower than the magnificent best of God's people.—*O. G. Herbrecht, Evangelical and Reformed, Junction City, Kansas.*



Wide World Photo

A Condensation of President Eisenhower's Address before the Second Assembly of The World Council of Churches

The Logistics of Faith

By Dwight D. Eisenhower

THERE are several good reasons why I feel highly honored to address briefly this second assembly of the World Council of Churches.

First, you are a world body of *spiritual leaders*. Though here in the United States we are sometimes thought to be too ready to adhere to material values, we are proud to be the host to an assembly pledged to such high purposes as yours. We are likewise delighted that your conference, representing 48 nations and 163 church groups, virtually brings the world to the center of the North American continent. However fervent the citizens of this nation may be about our own country, all of us realize that the problems and hopes before us today are world problems and world hopes. More and more, we understand the prophetic wisdom of John Wesley's statement, "The world is my parish."

Second, you call yourselves a *council*. The term suggests that you accept the injunction, "Come, let us reason together." Deliberations such as yours, involving long-range as well as immediate objectives, can lend depth and distance to our own thinking. International political conferences deal habitually with crises, and their results often are little more than a series of improvisations. Indeed, responsible officials frequently have no opportunity to deal with a matter until it becomes a crisis. Woodrow Wilson complained, "By the time anything gets to me, it's a problem." We in government often feel the same way today: in many respects we envy you your chance to meet and plan on a positive basis for the world in the years ahead.

Great Expectations

Third, you are a council of *churches*. You represent a vast body of believers—of men and women who believe in belief, who know the power of believing. You are custodians of a definite faith and confidence in an age of uncertainty and bewilderment. Many of you have what the Quakers call a concern. Your energies are pledged. You are committed to a program that involves personal responsibility for the general good.

It therefore heartens us to have an assembly of this sort in the United States of America. . . .

We shall expect much of your convocation. We hope that you will touch our imagination. Remind us again and again of the vision without which the people perish. Give us criticism in the light of sound religious ideals. Kindle anew in us a desire to strive for moral greatness and show us where we fall short. We shall listen if you speak to us as the prophets spoke in days of old.

We look to you for another thing and that is for a practical demonstration of the Christian ethic, to show us over and over again how it can be applied to all sorts of problems. This is what you might call the logistics of faith. . . .

Men of Good Will

There is another thing we can hope to learn from your being with us. I illustrate it by quoting the statement of a former college president—and I can understand the reason for his speaking as he did. "I have two kinds of problems," he said. "The urgent and the important. The urgent are not important and the important are never urgent." This, I think, represents a dilemma of modern man. Your being here can place the important before us—and perhaps even give the important a touch of urgency. And you can strengthen our faith that men of good will, working together, can solve the problems confronting them. . . .

The achievements of believing men and women in every generation remain a challenge to us in ours. Faith has, indeed, moved mountains.

Ours is a time when great things must again be dared in faith. Around the world men and women anxiously search the future for the dawning of a just and lasting peace. Its winning cannot be left to the diplomat and the soldier; history is filled with the stories of their failures, no matter how skillful or devoted their efforts.

Yet those failures have not destroyed the hope. There is no other longing of men so universal and so indestructible as the yearning for a lasting, just and global peace. I believe that even if this goal seems for the moment far beyond our reach, there is nevertheless much that each of us, you and I, can do to help attain it. . . .

How can we help strike this spark of dedication

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER delivered this address on August 19 before an estimated audience of 20,000 World Council Assembly participants and visitors at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. A biographical account of the President's religious background and faith, by the editor of the Christian Century, *appeared in the* Century *for March 26 and simultaneously in* Life.

in receptive hearts in every land around the earth? . . .

First—and at the very least—there would be a reminder to each of us that the responsibility for peace or conflict rests, in some degree, with each of us. Each would be heartened and strengthened by the certainty of close comradeship in faith and purpose.

Thus there would be set in motion a great and growing force that could unify men in peace as a common peril does in war.

There would be initiated unceasing study of the principal factors in the global problems that seem to impede progress toward peace. There would be generated a support for honest and unselfish world leaders that would inspire them to plumb new depths of knowledge and understanding and seek new paths toward conciliation. There would spring forth and be carried out new projects for defeating the despair and suffering and hopelessness in which millions now live. And the destruction of the conditions that shrivel the soul and starve the body would add new millions to the soldiers of the faith—the faith that the children of God can live —if they so will—in the climate and the relationships that mean justice and decency and peace. . . .

To Every Man Who Owns a House

Life's Fixed Intangibles

By Loring D. Chase

"To your tents, O Israel!" I Kings 12:16.

IT had been long since the Hebrews had lived in tents. They had settled in villages and lived in houses of brick and stone. But rather than continue subject to the whim of a tyrant, rather than submit to more forced labor, they would risk everything in resistance. Better to live as free men in tents than to wait in houses to be dragged off to bondage. The rallying cry rang out, "To your tents, O Israel!"

Now what has this vivid bit of ancient history to do with us? After all, our homes are important to us. We came to this community to establish the kind of homes we wanted. We mortgaged our future to pay for them. We like it here.

It's natural enough that people who have lived in that horrid little apartment in early married life, and then in that crowded neighborhood in Bergen County, or Westchester County, or Nassau County—or their counterpart around Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis or Los Angeles—it's natural enough that they should fall in love with the half acre or more of Connecticut brush, boulder and hardpan that they call their own, and whereupon they expect to settle, as they say, "for good."

What labor, planning and expense go into the establishment of a home! This is good—it must be good—everyone says it's good. One ought to have convenience and comfort to release him for more worth-while things than bucking up the woodpile; one ought to live amid beauty rather than surrounded by ugliness; and the children should be safe, with air and sunlight and shelter and space to play in.

Maybe you think ministers wouldn't know about this, since they live most of their lives in semi-public housing projects. But visit a minister who has bought himself a summer home and see how his frustrated nesting instincts let themselves go! Once I called on Rt. Rev. Hatch—some years before he became Episcopal Bishop of Connecticut —at his summer place in East Lancaster, New Hampshire. He had put the love of his heart and the work of his capable hands into the rebuilding of an old farmhouse that was his family's pride and joy. But after he had taken me on the usual tour of the wonders that his labor had wrought, he smiled and said, "You know, this can become a sin!"

Good for What?

Quite subtly, somehow, the house and yard can become an expression of our pride, an extension of our ego; and we become possessed by our possessions. Our nervous system seems to extend out into our lawns and hedges, and when someone steps on our daffodils, we feel pain; we find that every contemplated change in the community, particularly in the use of its real estate, finds us thinking, "How will this affect me and my house?"

Leave the house for a minute and go for a subway ride, and perhaps you will see what I am driving at. A New Yorker who prided himself on his knowledge of the intricacies of the city took his oriental friend from one point to another on the subway. Starting out with seats on a local train, he pulled his friend to the door at a given

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LORING D. CHASE became pastor of the Congregational Church at New Canaan, Connecticut, in 1950 after three years as its associate pastor. A graduate of Yale Divinity School, he worked four years with rural churches as minister-at-large of the Connecticut Conference of Congregational Christian Churches.

stop and propelled him across the crowded platform and into an express train, where they stood the rest of the way to their destination. As they hurried across the platform to the escalator, the New Yorker explained triumphantly to his oriental friend that by changing trains they had saved two minutes. And as they mounted the escalator the New Yorker heard the quiet question, "What significant thing shall we do with the two minutes we have saved?"

Now come back to our homes, the homes we have worked so lovingly and so diligently to create—what significant thing shall we do with them? How shall we relate them to the world? When one reads the story of Rehoboam and Jereboam, he feels that what is taking place in our world is not too unlike the events of 925 B.C. in Palestine, with tyranny, oppression and revolution rampant. The world is taking to its tents! And what shall we do? More especially, what shall we as *Christians* do?

Shall we pull the quiet shelter of our homes around us and separate ourselves from all the uproar? Some try to do that; to seek a splendid antiseptic isolation within which they can remain uncontaminated and "good"—though what they are "good for" is not so clear. Such an effort at separation from the world has been likened to the clock in a glass case on a Victorian mantelpiece: "remote, dust free and losing time." It was with bitter sarcasm that Isaiah said, "Come, my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until the wrath is past." If we hide, we are simply losing time, be we ever so free of dust.

Ferment of Christianity

We must understand that revolution is the basic fact of our world. We must relate ourselves as Christians to a world of upheaval. This is no new situation for Christians. When Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica, people shouted that "these men who have turned the world upside down have come here also." "These men," they felt, had revolutionized the world. Christianity and revolution go together. So long as there is tyranny, injustice, oppression, poverty, Christians must seek to turn the world upside down!

"To your tents, O Israel" is a call to the churches. In a book which seeks to examine why the Christian church was established in China only to be swept away, it is suggested that one reason for the repeated failure of the church was its acquisition of too much property in relation to effort put forth—property which often isolated Christians from the Chinese they sought to win. The Willingen Report of the International Missionary Council suggests that "the foreign missionary must manifest those attitudes and follow that pattern of life—in some instances strikingly simple—which will lower any barrier to fellowship between him and those to whom he goes. Moreover the times are such that missionary agencies must allow those willing to do so to face risks to health and life." A recent visitor to Asia declares that the church must not overlook "the fact that there are young people who are sincere, consecrated, tough-minded and loving enough to live on or near the standard of living of the people in mission lands. We can find Christians who will outlive the communists by identifying themselves with the people."

"To your tents, O Israel!" is a call to governments and citizens. We must relate ourselves helpfully—with our property—to the rest of the world. Through Point IV we have built irrigation dams in Afghanistan, harbor installations in Burma, maternity centers in Bolivia, a fertilizer factory in Pakistan, 224 miles of sewers in Chile. We have developed handicraft training in Ethiopia, live-stock improvement in Iran, locust control in Iraq, new varieties of corn, sugar cane, rice and grass in El Salvador, a banking system in Saudi Arabia. We have participated in other projects like these through the United Nations.

Freedom from Material Tyranny

It was for freedom from enslavement that the rallying cry of Israel went up. It was for the ancient freedom to think independent thoughts and to give them voice—a freedom for the sake of which the Hebrew priests preserved untouched the antipriestly writings of the prophets—a freedom for the sake of which David submitted to the withering scorn of Nathan, and Ahab let Elijah call him names.

It was for the hope of freedom from fear, for the vision of the time when every man might sit under his own vine and fig tree, and none should make them afraid—it was for that that Israel withdrew to its tents.

It was for the freedom to do the work they felt called upon to do—not for forced labor to satisfy a king's vanity—that Israel repudiated Rehoboam.

One cannot eat these freedoms, or wear these freedoms, or shelter oneself from the storm with these freedoms. They cannot be seen. Yet we know that Paul was right when he said that "the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."

In quite another situation Paul spoke also of freedom: "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." And for this freedom we must stand fast today—threatened as it is from the left and from the right; by the tyrants of the iron and bamboo curtains and their agents, and by the would-be tyrants of our own land who are afraid of the revolution that is abroad in the world—the great revolution which the communists are trying so hard to capture, but which by nature belongs to the Christians of the world.

This freedom is threatened by those who are afraid of freedom, who cling to the tangibles of property as of first importance and who defend them with the intangibles of hatred and suspicion and fear, though they can also turn a man's house into a place to wait to be dragged away.

A tent is better than such a house!

20th Century Churchmen

By Herbert Booth Smith

They stood every man in his place. Judges 7:21.

THE book of Judges offers an instructive story of how a man revised the roll of his followers. First he reduced the number from 32,000 to 10,000 by offering all the cowards and slackers an opportunity to go home. Then he still further cleaned house by noting the difference between those who lapped and those who knelt down to drink, and this left only 300. But of the 300 the historian was able to say, "They stood every man in his place."

One of the problems of our modern churches arises at just this point. So many of our rolls are padded with waste material. Tailors put a certain amount of padding into every suit of clothes. It is not part of the cloth; it is a foreign substance: but it makes the suit look better. Likewise there is a certain amount of padding in every ecclesiastical organization. It is not of the real material, but it makes the annual report look better.

Christian Character

I recall hearing Fred B. Smith say that you can hold only as many men in the average church as you can provide with work they consider essential to the life of the group. Similarly, when Reginald Campbell of London was asked by a reporter to comment on his findings during his visit to our country, he mentioned two things: (1) the large place the Roman church had in the public press and (2) the fact that our American ministers too often are overworked hacks, burdened with details which their laymen should assume. In view of this, let me suggest some characteristics of the efficient Christian layman.

I believe, for one thing, that the 20th century churchman should be a man of real piety. Did not St. Paul suggest to his friend Timothy that hands should not suddenly be laid on any man? I recall a fine man to whom I had spoken about becoming an elder in my church. He wisely borrowed my book of church order, to ascertain what it had to say about the qualifications for such an office. When he returned it to me, he said that he did not feel worthy to be an elder. One would prefer that attitude to one of careless acceptance.

Applied Christianity

I believe also that a modern churchman should be an exponent of practical Christianity. We remember the scorn which Jesus poured on the type of man who devoured widows' houses and for a pretense made long prayers. He would be equally scornful today.

Walter Rauschenbusch used to tell of a health officer in the city of Toronto whose custom it was, when impure milk was shipped in by a farmer, to pour it into the street and placard the cans with large red labels before shipping them back. This would hit the man where he lived; and when he drove up to the station he would be embarrassed to have his neighbors see the picture. One day a Mennonite farmer found his cans thus labeled, and swore a worldly oath. Accordingly he was summoned before his church and excluded from membership—not for offering impure milk for the consumption of little children, but for expressing his belief in damnation in a nontheological way. Rauschenbusch held that the proper action for the Mennonite authorities would have been thus: "Our brother was angry and profane. He must settle that alone with God. But he has also defiled the milk supply by unclean methods. Voted that he be excluded from the fellowship of the church until he has given proof of his repentance."

Faithfulness to Duty

I also hold that the modern churchman should live up to the vows of his office. One wonders how many present-day officers remember or realize what they promised when they were ordained. I suggest that at some of our church board meetings we turn away from that awful thing called the docket and read the affirmations made by the members when they assumed office. During a session of the synod of New York state, a board secretary was rudely interrupted by a delegate as he read the board members' obligations as stated in the constitution. The delegate charged that the secretary had no right to lay on the shoulders of the laymen the duties for which their clergy were paid. When the objector was invited to read from

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HERBERT BOOTH SMITH, former pastor of Presbyterian churches in Rochester, Knoxville, Los Angeles (27 years) and Burlingame, California, has served in the ad-interim ministry since 1951. In September he became temporary pastor of North Presbyterian Church, Denver, Colorado. This sermon was preached while he was with the First Presbyterian Church on Walnut Hills in Cincinnati.

the book for himself, and found to his surprise what he had vowed, he apologized deeply.

One reason I like the story of Gideon and his braves is that it pictures "every man in his place." When J. Wilbur Chapman went many years ago to the pastorate of Bethany Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, one of his office bearers told him, "Chapman, you are not big enough for the office you hold, in your own strength; but we elders are going to stand by you. We will sit up on the pulpit platform and pray for you while you speak." After Dr. Chapman had become well known he told me that John Wanamaker, who was then in the President's cabinet, always left Washington in time to be in his place on Sunday. Wanamaker would sit immediately behind the preacher, and Dr. Chapman would often feel a tug on his Prince Albert coat and hear a voice saying, "God bless you man, that's great!"

Finally, I believe that the modern churchman should cultivate an esprit de corps with others of like precious faith and service. If there is a brotherhood of locomotive engineers, there should be a brotherhood of ecclesiastical engineers. If the waiters in the restaurants can organize for better wages, or the barbers form a union, why should not churchmen affiliate for the glory of God? I wish somebody would organize the Amalgamated League of Church Officers, or the Federation of Ecclesiastical Managers, or the Gideon's Band of Religious Leaders. Call it anything you wish, but somebody, pray, start something.

What I have in mind is a church officers' association. If all the men of our Protestant churches in a given community could catch a vision of what could be accomplished for the cleaning up of the city, for example, by a united drive of the finest man power, would not the forces of evil face defeat? Protestant men must move and march together!

MYSTERY OF THE ARMED HORSEMEN

A Children's Sermon for Reformation Sunday

By Robert H. Simonton

Federated Church (Congregational and Baptist), Skowhegan, Maine

EVERYONE likes an action story with cowboys, Indians and horsemen. Every night at our house we listen to either the Lone Ranger and Tonto or Red Rider or Sergeant Preston. I'll bet most of you do, too.

This morning I want to tell you a story which any one of these programs could have presented, because it's a real thriller. It's called the "Mystery of the Armed Horsemen." But the strangest thing about this story is that it's about the Christian hero, Martin Luther, about whom we think a great deal today.

Now Luther had just been in a very dangerous situation. He had been summoned before the powerful leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, and he had been declared a heretic. That meant he wouldn't believe what they wanted him to, but would speak only the ideas about God, Jesus and the church that he himself believed.

After the meeting, Luther had been allowed to leave as a free man. But most of his friends suspected that agents of the Roman Church would overtake him on the road, make him a prisoner and eventually put him to death for being a heretic. Their fears were justified.

With a few friends, Luther jostled along the homeward way in an old wagon. As the ancient vehicle entered the woods on the outskirts of his birthplace, armed horsemen rushed out of the woods and with much violence dragged Luther to the ground. His friends fought bravely to protect him, but without success. Luther was bound and thrown on a horse and led off into the woods. The worst fears of his companions had been realized. Martin Luther, the Christian hero, had been kidnaped and whisked away. Word of his capture spread like wildfire, and threats were hurled at the Roman Church.

After a few days of discouraging silence, letters from Luther began arriving at friends' houses. They were amazed to learn what had happened.

It seemed that Luther's friend Frederick the Wise, a very powerful and influential man, had decided to protect him. Knowing full well that Luther would refuse protection, Frederick sent his own armed horsemen to hide in the woods and kidnap Luther. Actually these armed horsemen were not enemies, but friends who saved him from real trouble a few miles farther down the road. And these horsemen had not dragged him to a prison cell, as was first believed, but rather had escorted him to the safe hide-out of Frederick's massive mountain castle at Wartburg.

So my friends, don't think that all the armed-horsemen stories you hear are just make believe. There were some pretty real ones in Christian history. There were the armed horsemen who saved Luther and made it possible for him to start the movement which has given us our Protestant churches. Perhaps we are in this church today because of the armed horsemen of long ago.

The Second Touch

By Arthur V. Boand

Then again he laid his hands upon his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and saw everything clearly. Mark 8:25.

AMONG the many mighty works which were done by our Lord during days in the flesh there was one which required, or for which he deemed it advisable, that he resort to the use of a second touch. Usually Jesus just said the word and it was done. To a paralytic he said on one occasion, "Take up your bed and go home," and immediately the man did so. To the woman who touched the fringe of his garment and was healed, he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well."

Occasionally he resorted to the use of touch, as in the instance of the leper who cried out to him, "If you will, you can make me clean." Then, Mark records, "Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I will; be clean.' "

In the incident from which our text is taken, however, he resorted to the use of a *second* touch. A blind man had been brought to him with the request that Jesus restore his sight. Leading the man outside the walls of the city, he moistened a fingertip and placed it upon the man's eyelids, asking, "Do you see anything?" To this question the man replied, "I see men; but they look like trees, walking." Thereupon Jesus *again* "laid his hands upon his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and saw everything clearly."

A Questionable Blessing

As we recall this miracle in the light of modern experience we wonder if much of the modern predicament, both in individual lives and in society itself, is not due to the fact that men have felt only the *first* touch of the Master—have come in contact with him, but that is all. As Arthur E. Southon puts it, "The first touch, or contact, with Jesus brought light, but everything so out of proportion and challenging in size that the former blindness must have seemed more attractive." To be able to see, but to see everything out of proportion, to see men like Birnam Wood moving toward Macbeth's castle at Dunsinane—men like trees walking—that is a questionable blessing if a blessing at all.

All around us are people who have had some contact with Christ. They have felt his touch in some way or at some time upon their lives. The very fact that they are living in a Christian nation has made an initial impression upon them. They live, in part at least, by the Christian ethic. They are challenged or shamed by Christ's moral standards. Many have joined the church and call themselves Christians. But they have felt only his first touch upon their blinded eyes and woefully need his second touch. How often we ministers hear an individual say, "I joined the church when I was a child, but frankly I do not know what it is all about." To bring the spiritual eyes of such persons into focus so that they may see clearly and intently, with everything in right perspective, the Master's second touch is needed.

Overwhelming Problems

Many people will admit that the Christian life is the only life to live, but they do not see why they need to make a complete surrender of their lives to Christ. Nor do they understand how they will find their lives by losing them for Christ's sake and the gospel's. They are equally uncomprehending as to why they should let go and permit God to have his way in shaping and directing the course of their lives.

There are businessmen and women who theoretically subscribe to the moral and ethical teachings of Jesus, but who do not see how they can put these precepts into practice in a society where "business is business" and everyone is supposed to look after Number One.

With half the people of America belonging to no church or synagogue, and with millions of the religiously affiliated half seeing only indistinctly through out-of-focus spiritual eyes, it is easy to understand what Arthur Southon means when he says: "Our modern civilization frightens people. Problems loom too large for them." He finds that "it has had some contacts with Christ, and so its eyes are no longer sightless, but its vision is distorted and frightening, and world problems look too big."

Hence we find many people talking wistfully of "the simpler life" or seeking some method and indulging in some mood of escape rather than facing life realistically and courageously. Thus we see alcoholism on an upward surge. Pessimism and defeatism are rampant. Authoritarianism in re-

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ARTHUR V. BOAND has been associate minister of Highland Park Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas, since 1950. A 1920 graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, where he received a church history fellowship, he has served pastorates in Utah and in San Antonio, Texas. He is the author of two collections of poetry.

ligion and government is to the fore. Some would stop the thinking process itself. Others have called for a moratorium on science. Well meaning people talk glibly about going back to Christ when our great concern should be to go forward with Christ. No one who has experienced Christ's second touch should fear the future or seek to escape the challenge of the hour.

On his way home from India, where he attended the World Conference of Christian Youth, Don Shriver—a graduate of Davidson College and now a student at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Va.—spent ten days in the British Isles. Three of those precious ten days were spent on the little island of Iona off the west coast of Scotland. Why? Was it because this little island, little more than three miles long and one of 787 similar small islands off the same coast, was of special historic interest? Was it because of the remains of monastic buildings from which devout monks sought for years to win Scotland for Christ? Was it because many Scottish kings lie buried there? Or was it because, as many devout souls believe, this tiny island is the best place to await the day of judgment? No, it was because there Don Shriver could meet and know George MacLeod, a Scottish Presbyterian minister, and see at first hand his world-famous Iona Community.

Disinterest in Religion

As minister of a Glasgow church, George MacLeod was greatly concerned that less than 25 per cent of the people of Scotland ever attend divine services today in a country where at one time everyone was supposed to be a member of the church and where most people attended church regularly. Even more disturbing to him was the fact that most of Glasgow's industrial workers had no interest whatsoever in religion or the church, and were indifferent to the claims of Christ upon their lives. All that they were interested in, he discovered, was food and clothing, housing and economic security.

Then, as it were, the second touch of the living Lord was laid upon the eyes and understanding of this minister. He saw that the church was not being realistic, that it was not applying itself to the problems which loom so large in the minds of the masses. Christianity, he decided, was seeking to meet 20th century problems with a 19th century technique and appeal. As he looked out upon his contemporary world he no longer saw men as trees walking—indistinct, confused, impersonal—but as individuals to whom work was as important, if not more so, than worship.

So there came into being, under the inspiring leadership of this consecrated and gifted Scottish minister, the Iona Community, with seventy laymen and ministers who refuse to separate the religious from the secular, work from worship, politics from religion. At Iona each summer they gather to worship in the abbey and work with their hands, lifting stones and mixing mortar, sawing timbers and rubbing shoulders in spirit with all men everywhere. Here work and worship, religion and politics, economics and Bible study, the heart and the hand, belong together, for Christ is the Lord of all of life.

A Texas minister, W. Jack Lewis, received the second touch of his Lord while doing graduate work in Edinburgh where he became acquainted with George MacLeod and his Iona Community. As a result, the University of Texas has on its campus a similar community, patterned after the Iona Community. There thirty-six young men live, eat, study, work and play together with the desire that whatever the nature of their life-work may be—law, medicine, politics, the church, journalism—it will all be undergirded by and permeated with the principles and teachings of Jesus.

Proper Perspective

The question we would raise is whether each of us has felt the healing and clarifying second touch of Christ upon our lives, or has he touched us but once.

We think that our problems are large and frightening, but compare them to the problems of first-century Christians. We speak of the paganism of our day, but think of the paganism of the Roman Empire even under Marcus Aurelius, the best of its emperors. We deplore the low moral standards of our day—and they should give us great concern—but read the first chapter of Romans to see how immoral a people can become. Today Christians are a majority in America, but in the first century they were a despised and persecuted minority. The very name Christian was given to them in derision—these Christ-followers, these Christians. Yet, knowing that their Lord was alive forevermore and having felt his healing touch upon their blinded eyes once again, they saw their duty and high privilege clearly, and went out courageously to win the world for Christ.

A Prayer of Faith

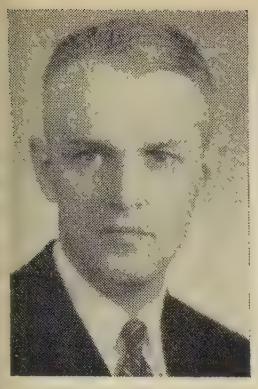
Festival of Faith, Second Assembly, World Council of Churches

By Charles M. Crowe
Methodist, Wilmette, Illinois

DEAR Lord and Father of mankind, we gather here from the ends of the earth to worship thee. We are glad that thy divine Spirit has brought us together. Give us in this place a renewed sense of the universal fellowship of thy Kingdom.

Hear the prayers of thy people everywhere for the peace of the world. Through our Lord Jesus Christ we would seek forgiveness for the barriers of hate and sin that separate and destroy. In Christ we would find new hopes and faiths for a cleaner world of freedom, justice and brotherhood. With Christ we would be joined in mind and purpose with all who name his name in every land.

Accept, O God, our sacrifice of devotion and service. Use all that we are and have for thy honor and glory and unto thee shall be praise and power forever and ever, world without end. Amen.



Loving God for His Own Sake

By Frederick A. Meyer

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.
Habakkuk 3:18.

ONE of the most popular trends in religion today seems to be what we may call the "cult of serenity." By that I refer to the type of preaching and writing which recommends religion as a spiritual soporific. For example, notice such sermon topics as "How to Live a Serene and Successful Life" and "Happiness through Faith." Halford Luccock writes of a man who preached for years on "Peace, Power and Poise in Perpetual Possession."

This type of emphasis implies that if you are religious you will be serene, if you are a Christian you will be happy, if you come to church you may find a soothing syrup for all your ills.

What is wrong with such ideas? Is it sinful to be happy or serene? No, of course not. Rather the trouble is that such preaching puts things in the wrong order. It regards God as a mere accessory to our plans and desires. It assumes that the chief end of God is to make us happy. And it loses sight of that fundamental truth of the Christian faith which holds that the chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

My subject turns attention to the opposite idea —that of loving God for himself alone. In developing this theme I shall ask you to look with me at two figures in the Old Testament.

A Shrewd Bargain

The first of these is Jacob. When he arose from his dream, he set up an altar and called the place Bethel, which means "House of God." Then he made his vow: "If God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God . . . and of all that thou givest me I will give the tenth to thee."

Jacob was a pretty shrewd bargainer. All these things that he specified—protection, food, clothing, a safe return from his journey—were to be provided by God. If and when they were forthcoming he would consent to worship the Lord. The final condescension of the whole bargain was this: "Of all that thou givest me I will give the tenth to thee." In other words, "If you will give me all these things, I'll see that you get back a 10 per cent return."

While it is easy to ridicule Jacob and point out what a selfish, narrow kind of religion he showed, I wonder whether we can always be safe in doing so. Many of us can find a good deal of that kind of religion in our own lives. It is the religion that says If. "If God will do these things for me, I will be ready to serve him." Surely that kind of religion did not perish with Jacob.

Selfless Praise

A rabbi told of a Jewish merchant who was crossing a bridge when it began to shake as though it would collapse at any moment. Quickly he prayed: "Just let me get safely to the other side and I'll give all my savings to the synagogue." The tremor subsided, and as the merchant neared the opposite bank he questioned: "Did I say *all* my savings?" Again the bridge shook, this time more violently than ever, and the merchant lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "O God, can't you take a joke?"

In contrast to such an attitude, look at a second figure from the Old Testament—Habakkuk. He is one of the minor prophets whom we do not often study or understand very well, and to many Christians today he may be just another strange character with a hard-sounding name. But reflect upon how close life in those days was to starvation and famine—how dependent men were upon the harvest of field and flock—as you listen to his song:

> Though the fig tree do not blossom,
> nor fruit be on the vines,
> the produce of the olive fail
> and the fields yield no food,
> the flock be cut off from the fold
> and there be no herd in the stalls,
> yet will I rejoice in the Lord,
> I will joy in the God of my salvation.

There we have it—two kinds of religion. One says If. "If everything goes well I will serve the Lord." The other says Though. "Though the fig tree do not blossom."

Are we in position to see which kind of religion

FREDERICK A. MEYER was called to Mayflower Congregational Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, three years ago after serving pastorates in Vermont and on Long Island. Both in Nassau County and in Minneapolis, he has been president of the ministerial association and active in Congregational affairs. A native of Brooklyn, he is a graduate of Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary.

God is looking for in his children today and always? Which seems to us worthy of our Lord and Master? Did he say If, or did he say Though? Did he hold back until he could be assured of safety and prosperity; or did he say, "We must work the works of him who sent me," without regard to what fate it brought him?

The first reason for loving God for his own sake is that this is what he expects of us. This is not to imply that such things as peace of mind, spiritual power for living, deliverance from fear and anxiety, are not parts of real religion. They are. But we are not to begin seeking God in order to secure such things. Rather we are to seek him, and love him and serve him for his own sake.

If there is any confusion in our mind on this issue, we need do nothing more than remember the one great term which Jesus gave us for our thinking about God. He is our Father. All good fathers are concerned for the welfare of their children, and all children may expect that their fathers will love and help them. But no child begins loving its father for these reasons. Instead children should love fathers for their own sake, in the unrestrained, uncalculating, free and generous affection of true family life. The same thing is true for our religion. The first commandment is that we should love God, with all our heart and mind and soul and spirit. There is the center and motivation of all true faith.

Beyond this, however, there is a second important reason for loving God for his own sake alone. It is that unless we do, we may be in for a great disillusionment. That is to say, if we allow ourselves to think of our devotion to God as a sort of investment, from which we expect regular dividends, then the day may arrive when those dividends do not appear. And we may fall victim to the idea that God has let us down.

Biblical Examples

Every pastor has to deal with this idea frequently in the course of his counseling. People come to his study with many stories and many problems, but this pattern is sure to appear: "Why did this happen to me? Wasn't I trying to live a good life? Haven't I been faithful in church attendance and support? I've never meant to harm anybody; I've tried to keep the commandments. Why did God let this misfortune come my way?"

If we seek examples of this attitude we need go no further than the Bible, that wonderful mirror of human motives and aspirations. Look at Psalms 42 and 43, for example. These are really two parts of one Psalm, and the theme is the same in both. There we find the Psalmist crying out from some disillusioning experience:

> I say to God, my rock;
> "Why hast thou forgotten me?
> "Why go I mourning
> because of the oppression of the enemy?"

And when we read the entire Psalms we see that his experience has been exactly this type. He had led the procession of pilgrims to the Temple. He recalled with joy his happy days of service to God. But then trouble had come along, and he was desolate. Not merely because of the trouble itself, but as a result of the gnawing question which came with it: "Why has God thus let me down?"

If this has been my question, perhaps I ought to be ready to face a challenging issue. What right have I to expect that God must make me prosper and be always safe from harm or trouble? Does God owe me anything? Rather do I not owe him everything? Is not the best that I have ever done far short of what his righteousness requires? What right have I to feel that he has let me down when trouble comes?

And if my rebellious soul inquires, as well it may, "What use is there of serving God?" I must be ready to hear the answer. "No use at all, unless and until I truly love him for himself alone, and not for any reward I may expect him to give." One sentence from the pen of Dr. Fosdick is perhaps our best summary here. He wrote once: "God never yet guaranteed to keep any man out of trouble, not even his Christ."

Meeting a Challenge

Finally we should discover a third important fact about loving God for his own sake. It is that only when we have reached this kind of love may we find the true fulfillment of life. That is what Jesus meant when he said, "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it."

The newspapers used to publish a summary of the people with the highest incomes in the country. I have not seen these figures recently, but probably they can still be found. Movie actresses, corporation presidents and others were rated in the order of the salaries they received. A good deal of ironic humor can always be extracted from such lists as these, noting that some actor or actress received more than the President of the nation, or that some radio crooner's salary was higher than that of a supreme court justice.

But this is not the point just now. Rather may we ask ourselves this question: Who is the more truly blessed—the people with the highest salaries, or the people who get the most joy out of their work? Do you remember that statement which is attributed to George Herbert Palmer, the professor: "If I could afford it I would be happy to pay Harvard College for the privilege of doing what it pays me to do." There was a man who had lost his life in service to a great profession. But truly he had found it in the highest kind of fulfillment any man can hope for.

Will not this same truth apply then to our relationship toward God? Have we found fulfillment, when our service to God has brought us prosperity and good fortune, or when we have learned to serve God in such love for himself that the very service itself is our deepest joy?

James Lichliter has a message for us in his story of three graves in a cemetery in China where an Australian mother and two daughters are buried. The young women went to serve the

gospel of Christ in China, but were killed in an uprising. When news reached their 60-year-old mother, she herself set out for China. Instead of complaining at being left alone in her old age, she spent her last twenty years laboring to carry on where her daughters had been cut off.

The choice is ours as life unfolds before us. We can be like Jacob and say If. "If God will help me, and prosper me and defend me, then I will be his worshiper." Or we can be like Habakkuk and that mother in Australia who did not say If, but Though; who loved God, not for his benefits or his favors, but for his own sake. And in that love they found fulfillment.

Christians May Become Immune To The Gospel Message

Vaccinated Christians

By Hoover Rupert

"This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."
Mark 7:6.

MODERN man is deeply indebted to Louis Pasteur, a French chemist of the 19th century. Pasteur found that the various diseases caused by septic bacteria could be prevented by inoculation with a mild form of the disease, using a weak brood of bacteria artificially cultured. This mild form of the disease rendered immunity to further infection.

Vaccination has been a great boon to the health of mankind. Preventive medicine has done much to prolong life, to prevent widespread epidemics and to ward off the threat of disease. But in the field of religion one finds a phase of life where inoculation as a preventive measure is a dangerous thing. Chad Walsh, in his *Early Christians of the 21st Century,* points out that if one travels far enough from Christianity, he may see it in perspective and decide that it is true. On the other hand, vaccination with a mild case of Christianity may result in immunity to the real thing.

Jesus was pointing out to the Pharisees that they had been vaccinated with a mild case of genuine religion. For the Pharisees, religion was keeping the minutiae of religious ritual and ceremony. They neglected the inner motives of religion that give it meaning and significance. Christ summed it up in the words of our text which Isaiah had used centuries before concerning Israel. Those who pay only lip service to the cause of Christ can always be found in the ranks of vaccinated Christians.

One factor that immunizes a person against Christianity is neglect of the inner motives that produce great faith. Precisely at this point we find the basis for Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisaic mind and practice. The Pharisees complained that Jesus and his disciples did not fulfill the ritualistic requirements for hand washing before eating. They were not suggesting that the disciples were unsanitary, but unspiritual, because they did not adhere to the letter of the ceremonial law. For the Pharisees, manners came before motives. Theirs was a reverence for regulation which stifled spiritual development.

Inner Motives

A person whose time is occupied with lip service and careful adherence to man-made laws can completely miss God's call to respond to the needs of others. The social outreach of personal religion grows from the inner motives of the unvaccinated heart which is not immune to the real thing. Indeed, the person whose light case of legalistic religion has rendered him immune to the real experience will have little response to others, to God, or to life itself.

Another factor that is involved in the process of inoculation is premature fixation of life at lower levels. One recognizes here the description of a neurosis. And in a real way the Pharisees whom Jesus condemned were spiritually neurotic. They never got further than legalistic religion. They lived by the letter of the law, and that gives little spiritual vitality. Do you remember that character in J. P. Marquand's book of several years ago, *H. M. Pulham, Esq.,* who personified the college alumnus never quite able emotionally to get away from his college days? Bo-Jo Brown, the professional alumnus of Harvard, was an eternal undergraduate who always brought the conversation back to the Yale game when he took the ball around end for thirty yards. We can smile at that, but the smile turns tragic when we carry the idea over into the field of religion and discover many perpetual undergraduates of the primary department of the Sunday school. One can fix the spot exactly in their life story where they became spiritually situated at the infantile level. Such vaccinated Christians go through life with the kin-

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HOOVER RUPERT is the minister of First Methodist Church, Jackson, Michigan, and former director of the Youth department of the General Board of Education of his denomination. He is the author of several books and a frequent contributor to periodicals.

dergarten concept of God and religion. And if you think that is exaggeration, you should hear some of these spiritual neurotics expound on their philosophy of religion and their idea of God!

One result of this process is preoccupation with shallow living. Such preoccupation finds its expression in several ways. For one thing, there is indifference to the deeper things of Christian faith. If we have complied with regulation and law, why worry about anything else? As someone has observed these are the Christians who "don't want to bother with Christianity because they don't want Christianity to bother them." Today's casual Christian is so preoccupied with other things in life that he is rendered immune and indifferent to the spiritual realities that alone bring religious vitality. Is there anything more deadening than indifference? It kills any spark of creative interest—whatever the realm of experience involved. How many parents there are who not only are uninterested themselves in religion, but are completely indifferent to the need for religious training for their children! These modern pagans are among those who ten or a dozen years from now will be coming into a minister's study somewhere asking, "Can you do something for my boy? He's in trouble."

But what of the church member who takes vows of loyalty to God and church, and is never seen or heard from again in that church? Has he not been vaccinated against the real thing? Here is another result of this vaccination process, there is the neglect of the disciplines that lead to Christian discipleship. To fail to grow is to die. One does not suddenly awaken one dark morning to discover that he has become unrighteous. There is a drift into the condition of life apart from God. And it begins here in the neglect of the basic disciplines of worship, study, prayer, daily devotion, reading the Bible, making an honest effort each day to bring the fruits of faith into the daily round of life. The further we drift the more immune we are to the real thing, until one day we are caught in the fast current of tragic godlessness.

Results of Immunity

The results of religious immunity can be seen in a trivial philosophy of life. Everyone has a philosophy of life, a code or set of beliefs. The person who is victimized by vaccination in the religious field finds himself saddled with a philosophy of life which has little significance. Immune to the real thing, he finds himself giving a first-rate loyalty to a second-rate cause, he takes of the native, God-given abilities and uses them in ungodly ways, or he accepts willy-nilly the gift of human personality and lives life on the lower levels. He may pay lip service to his Creator, but his life does not reflect the inner integrity of one who has plumbed the depths for a great faith.

Vaccinated Christians are likely to end up with futility, aimlessness and cynicism, the deadly perils of age. When you have no spiritual capital, no religious security, the devastating experiences of life will foreclose on your life. You may escape the complete capture of life by the forces of religion only to discover you cannot escape their enemies. Life ends up in cynical loneliness, aimless indifference and frustrated futility.

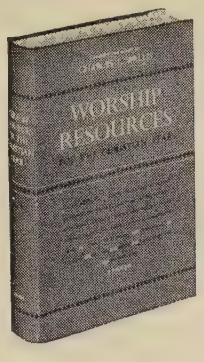
Jesus pointed out clearly that the worship of God from the heart is the sole means of overcoming the deadening effects of immunity in religion. When we enter into the fellowship of Christ's followers who see the importance of the inner reality of religious faith—whose practice is prompted, not by the outer compulsion of legalism in religion, but by the inner promptings of the Spirit of God in the human heart—we are on the road to a recovery of our spiritual susceptibility.

This means we will acknowledge the priority of God's commands as over against our own material and physical welfare. Jesus lived by the Hebraic commandments. He was not sanctioning their repeal, but he was opposing the hundreds of intricate religious maneuvers which men had added to the commandments through the years. The life that puts the call of God in top priority, that accepts the basic commandments as practical expressions of the inner faith, is a life that has avoided the peril of immunity.

Recovery of Real Religion

We who seek the recovery of real religion as Jesus lived it and gave it to us will seek moments of high spiritual inspiration. But we dare not be victimized by the misuse of those high moments. Remember the experience on the Mount of Transfiguration? Peter and the disciples were spiritually ecstatic because they had been deeply moved by the reality of the presence of the prophets while Jesus prayed. "Let us keep alive here," they said, "the spiritual glow that has meant so much to us in these moments." Had they succumbed to the temptation to settle down on the heights of inspiration, they would have vaccinated themselves against the deeper reality of a religion which needs not only moments of high spiritual inspiration, but expression through witness and service down in the valley of human need and social fellowship. Real religion requires that we draw from these mountain-top experiences every ounce of inspiration we can, but with the understanding that inspiration counts for most only when it is transformed into the living reality of daily life.

Aristotle spoke about the true nature of a thing as having to do with the highest it can become. Rufus Jones applied that to persons and to religion and suggested that the true nature of a person or a religion is the highest it can become. We need to avoid the peril of closing off life at a lower level than the highest it can become. For the Christian the ceiling is unlimited. Through Christ we gain an understanding of the peril of preventive religion, the kind that keeps us from full achievement. But more important, he introduces us to the kind of religion of which God might well say, "This people honors me with their lips, but more important, their heart is opened to me."



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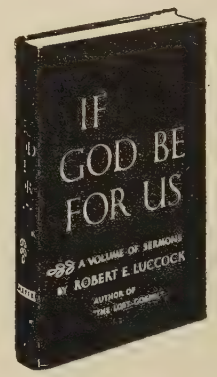

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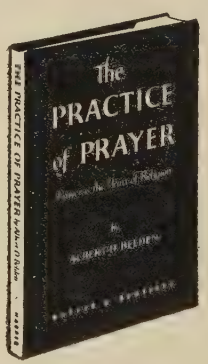

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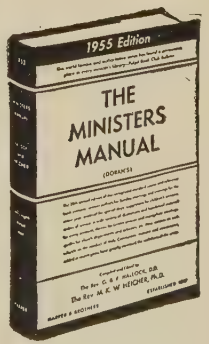

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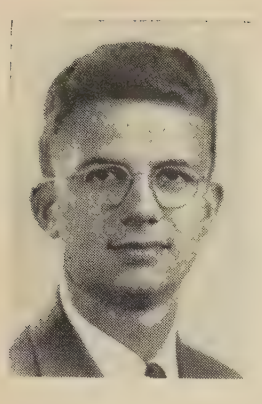

Teen-Agers Size Up Church Worship

By Leslie Conrad, Jr.

NO generation of youth has ever been completely satisfied with conditions as they found them—the conditions in their Christian churches included. The present generation is no exception. Today's young people have some very definite opinions about the worship services in their congregations—all the way from the first hymn to the benediction.

As full-time director of church youth work for the past three years, I have had the privilege of "brushing brains" with a substantial cross-section of young people in the United States and Canada, while their own pastors were not in eavesdropping distance. During the summer months my appointments have taken me to many church-sponsored youth camps and assemblies. As part of my assignment, I have taught a course on "Youth Work in a Local Church" which affords me the opportunity to question teen-agers about all phases of their church life. Both oral and mimeographed forms of questionnaire were employed.

My three-summers' roster of pupils was in excess of one thousand. As a rule they could be classified as "youth most interested in the church's program." If they were not especially interested, at least their parents, who paid their expenses, were.

Hymns Evaluated

About 95 per cent of those who participated in the surveys were members of Lutheran churches. The average age was 17, with an age span of 13 through 19.

"If *I* were the preacher at *my* church," chime the teen-agers who were questioned, "I would make many immediate changes in our worship services. And I would begin with the hymns that we sing."

Young people everywhere like to sing. It is not unusual to find groups assembled in the open, or packed in an automobile, pitching their own tunes and lustily letting their lungs go on an expanding spree.

LESLIE CONRAD, Jr., is executive secretary of the Luther League of America. A graduate of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Columbia, South Carolina, he has held pastorates at Belmont and Hickory, North Carolina.

These same boys and girls like to sing in church. But too often their hearts—and their heads—are not so much a part of their singing as on away-from-church occasions.

It may seem unfortunate that many are cold toward some of the great hymns of the Christian church.

Our information indicates that young people generally look at a hymn in the same light in which they evaluate a popular song. (1) Does it have a particular message for me? (2) Is it easy to sing? (3) Do other young people like to sing it—and are they singing it? (4) Does it have a stirring melody? The deeper and more complicated the message—and the melody—the less interested youth are in participating. There is more than a sufficiency of evidence pointing up the need of teaching and re-teaching both hymn message and melody appreciation to our youth.

Using New Translations

Young people appreciate hearing the Word of God read in public—providing it is read well; that is to say, slowly and distinctly enough for its meaning to be understood. They would urge the preacher to read from one of the newer translations.

They like to sing; they like to pray, silently and audibly; but their greatest church worship blessing comes from the sermon. In every camp or summer assembly class, they overwhelmingly ranked the sermon as the high point—the No. 1 worship feature—of the church service. Therefore it may be helpful to the minister to consider some of the opinions of youth concerning the sermon.

Is the text important? Surprisingly, it is! On the average, out of every 41 whom I questioned, 40 expressed a desire for a text. As for length, they say: "Pastor, make it short; the briefer the better!" Thirty-nine out of 41 want a text that is short enough to remember after the church service is over.

It has long been rumored that youth are not interested in listening to doctrinal sermons; it has been noised abroad for more than a generation that clergy preach "over the heads of their youth." Both charges are unfounded and untrue.

Teen-agers appreciate knowing exactly where their churches stand on subjects of faith and conscience, and why they stand where they do. However, they conscientiously confess that much of the theological terminology used by their ministers fails to register for even a moment. Seventy per cent admit their inability to define such often-used pulpit terms as grace, redemption, sanctification and justification.

Sermon Illustrations

Youth are almost unanimous in their desire for appropriate illustrative material in sermons. Better than 98 per cent of those questioned consider illustrations an essential part of every sermon. And they are choosy about their illustrations.

As might be expected, they prefer three types of illustrations—and in this order: (1) events with which they can associate themselves, (2) current events, (3) experiences of other young people. Many of the boys, and a goodly number of the girls, reported interest in illustrations from the field of sports. (They are certainly "Pauline" in this respect.) Historical events also rated rather high. However, excerpts of an illustrative nature from drama and literature pack very little punch.

The survey results conclusively indicate that the "already cooked and ready for heating" type of illustration—bound by the thousands in book form—makes no impression on this age group.

Speak Naturally

Preachers, beware of the opinions you express in the pulpit! Young people seldom bother to dissociate the preacher from the Word of God which he preaches. In fact, 46 per cent actually prefer the preacher's opinion to the printed word of the writer of Scripture—just in case there should be a difference of opinion. It is a frightening, yea, sobering revelation, indicating how closely youth link their preachers with the spiritually-gifted men of God who wrote the Bible.

Whoever spread the word around that very few pew-sitters are saved after the first 20 minutes of the sermon, had not consulted present-day church-attending youth about the matter. Only one out of seven young persons is satisfied with a 20-minute sermon. Four out of seven prefer that

the minister just forget the time element altogether.

And while you are preaching—whether it be twenty or thirty minutes—deliver your message in a natural voice. The "holy tone" or the "artificial twang" is unacceptable to more than 97 per cent of young listeners. Voice affectations for all parts of the worship service—liturgy, Scripture, sermon or prayer—are anathema.

Youth also recognize the power of prayer, and are quick to say: "Whereas the sermon is the high point, it is the general prayer that brings us closest to God during the worship service." Eight out of nine young people prefer "free" prayers to "read" prayers.

More than a thousand Protestant young persons have had their say. If they also had the opportunity of summing up their thoughts for readers of The Pulpit, I am convinced that they would tell pastors: "Please give our opinions your serious consideration as you seek to improve congregational worship services."

Pulpit Post

Pulpit Filing Problem

SIR: As an enthusiastic supporter and avid reader of your publication ever since I began preaching, I would like to make a suggestion. I read each issue of The Pulpit with sermon preparation in mind and scissors in hand. I never fail to clip the Pulpit Paragraphs and often many other items. These I file away to be used at future dates. There is one difficulty, though. Often other valuable parts of the magazine are ruined when one section is snipped out. Would it be practical to print the Paragraphs and Bulletin Board sentences with advertisements on the reverse side, so that no reading matter is ruined when the other side of a page is cut?

WILLIAM H. ACKERMAN, JR.
Utica Charge, Evangelical and Reformed,
Lewistown, Md.

[*This presents a difficult make-up problem. Readers facing this situation may find help in Virgil A. Kraft's article (Oct. 1952), "A Filing System."—Editors*]

From the Philippines

SIR: One of our younger missionaries directs a very promising student center on the edge of the campus of the Agriculture College of the University of the Philippines. Last evening he was with us and read the current issue of The Pulpit with much enjoyment. He used to get it, but with a growing family his expenses have increased. I wonder if some subscriber would be willing to send him used copies. His address is: Rev. Paul R. Dotson, College, Laguna, P. I. MRS ALBERT J. SANDERS.
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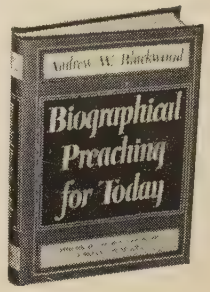

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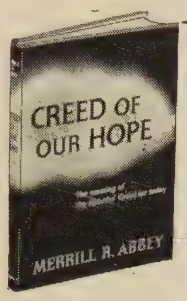

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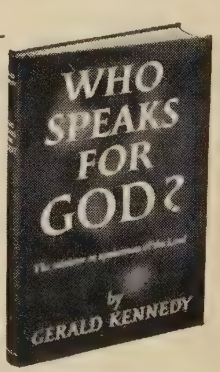

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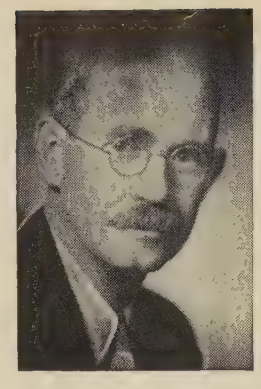

Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

Mere Morality

RECENTLY I was talking with the president of a theological seminary. In the course of the conversation he volunteered the information that there were three basic positions in the Christian economy: (1) doctrinal correctness, (2) direct guidance by the Holy Spirit, (3) properly administered sacraments. The last was the position, he assured me, of such communions as Roman Catholicism and the Episcopal Church; the first was that of his church (Presbyterian, U.S.). As I remember it, he passed a bit lightly over precisely what lesser groups constituted the nebulous second position.

There seemed to me a strange omission as he spoke, but I did not mention it, for he must have been correct: the easy and, shall I say, sweeping precision with which he spoke made the thought of query, not to mention correction, unthinkable. One would as soon ask the pope or Senator McCarthy for his evidence.

But nonetheless I sensed the absence of an element which seems to me—yes, I confess it frankly—more essential than any of his neatly catalogued trio: sound ethics. And during the time which has elapsed since our conversation I have found myself reflecting repeatedly upon this omission, for it appears to me ominous. For years I have shuddered every time I heard the easy and casual reference to "mere morality" and its companion piece, "reducing Jesus to a mere moral man."

I do not wish to sound theatric or to appear in the spread-eagle pose so beloved by many platform experts, but I must confess that the use of the adjective *mere* in those connections appears to me scarcely short of blasphemous. An earlier significance of *mere*, viz., "nothing less than," "entire," "sheer," "unqualified," is now marked obsolete. Instead, the word connotes a definite and unfortunate limitation: a *mere* child, a *mere* form.

That is precisely the danger. In the eyes of far too many of our population that is exactly what morality is—the echo of *Pilgrim's Progress* still sounds in our ears—a negligible or at least not particularly important element that may be taken for granted. But the tragedy is that it can't be taken for granted. Its absence is as conspicuous in many an ecclesiastical decision and action as it was in the easy pronouncement of the Southern Presbyterian theological seminary president. Is it too much to say that the man who can speak of "mere morality" is utterly ignorant of what real morality is? I won't say so, but I still can think.

And the almost grotesque thing is that those who neglect this element the most, in their insistence on correctness of doctrine, pride themselves the most on their acceptance of the Bible as the only complete and all-sufficient statement of God's will and pleasure for his world. But how easy it is to forget the importance of ethics, morals—call it what you will—in both Testaments. The Ten Commandments, the first Psalm, the most unforgettable pronouncements of an Amos, Micah or Jeremiah, the searing words of the prophet from Nazareth, the lengthy and revealing catalogues of virtues and vices in the letters of his doughty champion, Paul of Tarsus—all these might well be pondered before the flippant and unbecoming *mere* is prefixed.

Or does the trouble lie in the fact that we have unwisely limited good morals to include only the avoidance of the more glamorous and interesting vices: getting drunk, committing murder or adultery, going to the movies on Sunday? The older I grow, the more convinced I become that there are other vices even more deadly: cruelty, malice, lack of integrity—what a list one could make! And against them and for their opposites there is ample support in the writings which the doctrinally correct delight to style the "dear old Book." After two thousand years it still remains tragically easy to say "Lord, Lord" and to remain quite obtuse to what would seem to be implied in "doing the will of my Father in heaven."

Ecumenical Awakening

BECAUSE the ecumenical awakening in this decade has brought most Christian groups into new realization of our allegiance to the Lordship of Christ, we know anew that enmity or war among peoples divides the church itself and breaks asunder the Body of Christ. Divisive nationalism has become treason to that high citizenship which we claim in the world church of Christ.—*Detroit Conference on the Church and Peace, 1953.*

Unity in Christ

By Mrs. Rena Karefa-Smart

Lay Member, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Freetown, Sierra Leone, British West Africa; Consultant, World Council's Evanston Assembly

I BELIEVE that the churches must become *the Church* in tropical Africa if the Kingdom of our Lord is to become a compelling reality for *all* men, and that two of the marks of that becoming will be the reorganization of church life along communal lines, and the achievement of unity between the divided and isolated sections of African Christendom. As the Church is born out of what are now missions and churches, and as multi-tribal, multi-racial, and supra-denominational congregations achieve community through worship and work, the world will observe the demonstrating of answers to its needs, and the body of Christ will live more nearly as God purposes it to live.

Witness Vitiated

Such becoming will be difficult in our day and part of the world, as it must be in every age and everywhere. For the powers of evil are ranged against it, and we Christians have not the power in and of ourselves to accomplish it. The tensions that threaten society threaten us in our life in society and in our life in the churches, and the weaknesses of contemporary Christianity vitiate our witness to the Lord who has called us. But the vision of a world in which every person is in conscious relationship with the God whose face we see in the face of Jesus Christ is too impellent to allow such reflections to impede Christian advance. It is this vision that must be kept before every Christian in tropical Africa no matter what his tribe, race, denomination, station or class. To do so, however, Christians must realize the corporate existence required by our true nature and in so doing repudiate any development that has made it appear that Christ has not one body but several bodies.

Understandable Word

If pagans and Mohammedans and materialists and Christians-in-isolation can observe life lived in community that is transformed by the living Lord, the body of Christ will be speaking a word that can be understood throughout Africa, and discovering ways yet unknown for abundant life. Congregations within this community will become laboratories for working out the answers to the vexed questions of Church unity. They in company with the young and generally cautious United Christian Councils will then lead the way to the coming great church of tropical Africa.

Not for the benefits of a practical nature or for purposes of expediency must we seek our true corporate nature, but because God wills it. Not simply because we will cease to function at all if we do not succeed in becoming one is unity imperative. Not only because our ministry to Africa will fail if we do not discover how to be the community of the saved that we invite others to enter must we seek together for guidance toward unity of purpose, love and life. But for all these reasons as they are caught up in the greatest reason of all: The Risen Lord is victorious over the powers that make for disunity and evil within the churches and in the world, and God gives to those who obey him the grace and power to live *now* in the Kingdom of eternal life, willing us to manifest in the world in which we are set the meaning of that life and the nature of him who has purposed it. To this end and in his name we must witness together, continuing in hope until he comes again.

Status Quo

WE have made a virtue of keeping the status quo. Our religious philosophy often is best expressed in the familiar cliche, "What was good enough for Father is good enough for me." This is a pious fraud and prevents the transforming power of God to use us or the church to transform the world. O. WALTER WAGNER.
Metropolitan Church Federation,
Greater St. Louis.

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Ministry of Music

By Ernest K. Emurian

Please Don't Offend

DISCUSSION of the Supreme Court ruling on segregation brings out the fact that the entertainment world has resolved the racial problem in its own way. In "Old Man River," it is no longer "darkies" who work on the Mississippi, but "people." And Negro author-composer James A. Bland would hardly recognize the modern version of his "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," guaranteed not to offend the most loyal member of the N.A.A.C.P.: "Carry me back to old Virginny,/ There's where the cotton and the corn and taters grow,/ There's where the birds warble sweet in the springtime,/ There's where this old weary [that's right; it's 'weary,' not 'darky's'] heart am long to go." So as not to offend anyone, we substitute words, omit phrases and emasculate the stirring and sentimental songs of yesteryear.

White people, too, sometimes object to certain songs, complaining, for instance that "Old Man River" makes slurring references to their race and infers that all whites are cruel "bosses" or lazy, idle rich who "play" all day! Soon, to satisfy the demands of both races, we may hear the baritones sing, "People all work on the Mississippi,/ People all work while the people play!"

Hymnologists have been doing this sort of thing for a long time. To avoid offending those who question the virgin birth, many hymnals offer a revision of Charles Wesley's "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing." The hymn no longer says, "Late in time behold him come,/ Offspring of the virgin's womb." Oh, no! Someone might disagree. Consequently Brother Wesley is brought up to date. Now he says, "Late in time behold him come,/ Finding here his humble home." That is guaranteed to make everybody happy and leave no room for controversy. The most conservative and the most liberal can sing together in musical as well as theological harmony. *Selah!*

Furthermore, having graduated from the status of "worms," Isaac Watts no longer sings, "Alas, and did my Savior bleed,/ And did my Sovereign die?/ Would he devote that sacred head/ For such a worm as I?" Sinners—yes; but worms—no! Too many cultured Christians might be offended.

And another thing—don't call the heathen "heathen." They don't like it. After all, they are hardly more heathen than many so-called Christians. So do not sing, "From all the dark places on earth's heathen races." Water it down and make it "earth's needy races." And these "needy" heathen are not "blind" when they "bow down to wood and stone." They are just "hungry." If you don't believe it, read some of the revisions of Reginald Heber's missionary hymn, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains." If you are going to try to Christianize these folks, for heaven's sake don't start off by antagonizing them!

As for a believer "clasping" the hand of God, that is no longer fashionable in this age of ecumenicity and eschatology. So Joseph Gilmore no longer sings, "Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine" ("He Leadeth Me"); he is made to say, "Lord, I would place my hand in thine." While both are doctrinally respectable, Gilmore actually said the former. And when it comes to recording your spiritual autobiography, be careful not to become too personal. It is legitimate for St. Thomas to cry, "My Lord and my God," but don't go around singing, "My Jesus, I love thee,/ I know thou art mine." That's a bit on the mushy side. Let's be more dignified and make it, "Lord Jesus, I love thee."

Since the Holy Spirit no longer "baptizes" believers, George Croly says, "The kindling of the heaven-descended dove." And now that we have outgrown Jesus' words, "The father who seeth in secret shall reward thee," and no longer speak of the rewards of the Christian life, we are consistent enough to change the lines with which Mary Ann Thomson closed her hymn "O Zion, Haste." Instead of "Give of thy sons, give of thy wealth—/ And all thou lendest, Jesus will repay," we sing merely, "O Zion, haste to bring the better day."

How long this trend will continue, and to what depths or heights it will reach, is anybody's guess. If we are to try to find a hymnological common denominator for every shade of doctrine, nobody knows where we will end up. Rather than making the Negro more respectable, such wrangling over words makes him appear as ridiculous as the hymnologist who writes his own beliefs into other people's hymns. If this is race relations at its best and Christian hymnology at its highest, maybe all of us need a little more of common-sense Christianity.

Sermon Summaries

So You Don't Like Communism!

By Robert D. Bulkley

Federated Churches, Corvallis, Ore.

THE question for us is not, "Do we like communism?" We don't! The question is rather, "Not liking it, what do we propose to do about it?"

First, we are called upon to know what communism is and what it is not.

Communism is not democratic socialism. Democratic socialism is one of the legitimate alternatives before the American people. To date they have decided overwhelmingly that they don't like it, but that is a matter of free choice; and, if at some future date they should choose it, they would not have "gone communist." At one election the people of Great Britain decided they liked socialism, and they voted it in. By the next election they decided they did not like it, and they voted it out. They may change their minds again and yet again on the subject, but they will not have resigned their freedom by doing so.

Communism is not the New Deal. You may like the New Deal, or you may dislike it, or you may like parts of it and dislike other parts; that is your American privilege and the way things should be. But to muddy the waters by seeking to identify the New Deal with communism is neither helpful nor honest.

Communism is not belief in social change. Neither, incidentally, is democracy belief that our present economic and social systems are in any sense perfect, so that they neither need nor could profit by change.

Definition of Term

Communism is not belief in civil rights. The fact that Communists have frequently, for expediency's sake, placed themselves in the forefront of movements in opposition to racial segregation and in favor of such civil rights legislation as fair employment practices acts and the elimination of discrimination in places of public entertainment does not in any sense indicate that these stands are communistic.

Communism is not belief in civil liberties. The fact that Communists have frequently, in order to attain these liberties for themselves, declared themselves in favor of free speech and free assembly does not in any sense indicate that these stands are communistic. Quite the contrary! In lands under Communist domination these are the very rights that have been destroyed.

Communism is not pacifism. You may support or oppose the pacifist position. You may feel sympathy for it or feel it is completely irrelevant to the realities of the situation in which we live. But it is impossible to say that a pacifist is a Communist. For pacifism, with its abhorrence of the use of force, is at the very opposite extreme from communism, with its willingness to use force whenever and wherever its purposes may be furthered thereby.

What is communism, then? The word "communism" has had other uses in the past, having been applied legitimately to the efforts of the early Christians who were described in Acts as selling their possessions and laying the proceeds at the feet of the apostles so that they "had all things in common." But to all intents and purposes the word's present meaning is support of the program of the Soviet Union.

Second, we are called upon not to shy away from positions because Communists take them. The Communist Party line changes from time to time according to the expediency dictated by the moment, and it is inevitable that Communists often support things that Christians also ought to support. As a result, many Christians back away from support of legitimately Christian enterprises simply because they discover that the Communists are supporting them too, and they are terribly afraid of being called "red." We should not do that, for as Christians we have the responsibility to assume Christian positions because they are fundamentally Christian; we are betraying our faith if we let ourselves be driven from them because of the company in which we find ourselves.

Political Football

Third, we are called upon to recognize for what it is the current hysteria against Communists. I am not talking now of legitimate attempts to keep track of the Communists and what they are doing by methods consistent with respect for the rights of every individual and with our traditional American freedoms. I am talking about loyalty oaths, the methods of investigating committees, the use of the "Communist menace" as a political football, all of which have come to be known by the general designation of mccarthyism. They represent a tremendous danger to our democratic way of life, all the more insidious because they use the language of democracy and purport to be defending it.

Fourth, we are called upon to say briefly what we ought to do positively about the Communist threat. We ought to keep track of the genuine Communists—not lock them behind bars,

The Bulletin Board

Contributed by Wylie F. Steen, Director of Alumni Affairs, Missouri Valley College, Marshall, Mo.

TRUE WORTH IS MEASURED BY GOOD ACCOMPLISHED, NOT BY GOODS ACCUMULATED.

WE SHOULD BE MUCH MORE AFRAID OF A GODLESS AMERICA THAN OF A GODLESS RUSSIA.

HE IS NO FOOL WHO GIVES UP WHAT HE CANNOT KEEP TO GET THAT WHICH HE CANNOT LOSE.

WILD OATS THRIVE BEST DURING A RELIGIOUS DROUGHT.

SOME WON'T BELIEVE THE BIBLE BUT WILL BELIEVE EVERY WORD OF A RADIO COMMENTATOR.

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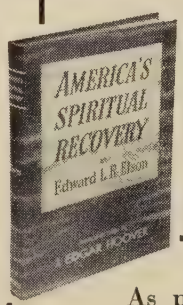
From the Nation's Capital,
EDWARD L. R. ELSON heralds



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but know what they are up to and be ready to take over in the event they move toward violence.

We ought to maintain in every feasible way our democratic heritage, not permitting ourselves to adopt the methods of the Communists in fighting communism, for then communism by another name enters through the rear door.

We ought as Christians to make every effort to convert Communists to the Christian faith. The great number of former Communists is an indication that it is quite unrealistic to say, "Once a Communist always a Communist."

We ought to make democracy work in such a way that it is dynamic and appealing to men who seek something for which to live and to which to give themselves. Where it is not working—where racial prejudice, economic imperialism, political irresponsibility raise their ugly heads—it is our task to clean house so that we can with clear conscience present democracy to the people of the world, not just as a rosy dream, but as a realizable possibility.

So you don't like communism! Neither do I! But I know full well that the best way to be sure that it fails to conquer the world is to make perfectly clear that there is an alternative which offers men hope of liberty with justice, of concern for the "least of these," of a free fellowship of nations striving together for peace and brotherhood. That is the alternative which a democracy grounded in the Christian faith in God and love for men can offer if it will be true to itself.

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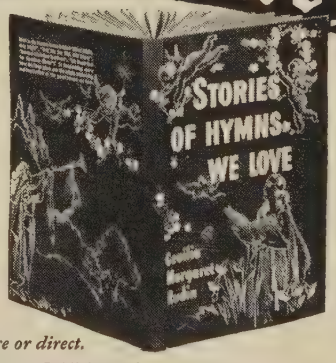

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Secret of Spiritual Strength

By Arthur A. Wahmann

Church of the Messiah (Presbyterian), Paterson, N. J.

But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.
Isaiah 40:31.

YOUR presence in this church today attests your desire for inner renewal. By means of three vivid figures of speech—*fly, run* and *walk*—the prophet seeks to describe the help which comes when the human creature enters into fellowship with his creator.

First of all, when God strengthens us, our personality is enabled to rise in the face of difficulty. Isaiah is reminding us that the spirit of the man of faith has wings—wings that are not fragile like the sparrow's, but strong like the eagle's. They can be unfolded, like the eagle's, to meet the storm and to rise with the fiercest gale.

On certain islands in Frenchman's Bay off the coast of Maine, the American eagle and his cousin, the osprey, have their nests, and one may watch them confront the winds blowing in from the Atlantic. As the gusts roar, the birds unfold their massive pinions and are borne upward by the flow of air. The stronger the gale, the higher the birds climb, not fighting the winds, but using them to attain the heights.

The prophet turns next to the metaphor of a courier carrying his message swiftly along the road. "They shall run and not be weary." The strength bestowed upon us while waiting upon the Lord will provide stamina

for our daily responsibilities. Isaiah is speaking now to those who find joy in their jobs. Yet no matter how satisfying your daily endeavors may be, they are probably exacting. The more absorbing your work, the more painstaking it must be. Depending upon the nature of your particular vocation, the day's demands are either physically, mentally or emotionally arduous; hence, though you enjoy running the day's course, sometimes you grow weary before its close.

The promise is that you will be given the stamina to accomplish any tasks confronting you that are worthy of being performed. We shall run and, when in the midst of the day's duties we grow fatigued, if we wait upon the Lord we shall be able to run some more.

Isaiah gives us yet another metaphor—that of the footsore traveler, plodding his long way, mile after mile, until he is exhausted. Many modern duties can be designated only as pedestrian, plodding, irksome. But for those who turn to the Almighty, there need not be exhaustion. We can receive the gift of perseverance through life's drudgeries. We "shall walk and not faint."

Some people's lives are almost free of monotony, while it is the lot of others to spend their days—and months and years—confined by dull routine. How important are some of the monotonous jobs that we take for granted! While on vacation I forgot about the street noises of Paterson. After returning from the quiet of an Adirondack lake, I was jolted out of bed shortly after dawn by the banging of garbage cans. For a moment I was annoyed. Then I thought of the men who awakened me and I said, "Put yourself in the place of the garbage man." His is not the pleasantest job in the world, but it is honest and extremely important to the health of a city.

Many activities fit into the prophet's figure—they are pedestrian. How boring some phases of housekeeping, or certain factory and clerical operations, must become! Or think of another activity not without drudgery: tending a shut-in dear one. We pastors never cease to admire the quiet heroism of those who tend the sick.

Whatever the drudgery that you may face, there is a guarantee of perseverance if you will but turn to the Source of all strength. "They shall walk and not faint."

Titles and Texts

"And the Walls Came Tumbling Down." Eph. 2:14—*For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility.* CECIL E. HAWORTH.
Friends Meeting,
High Point, N. C.

• • •

"Pass It On." Matt. 10:8—"*You received without pay, give without pay.*" WYNN WARD.
First Presbyterian,
Sioux Falls, S. D.

• • •

"Needed—Prophets!" Numbers 11:29—"*Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!*"
Methodist, HAROLD A. PRUYN.
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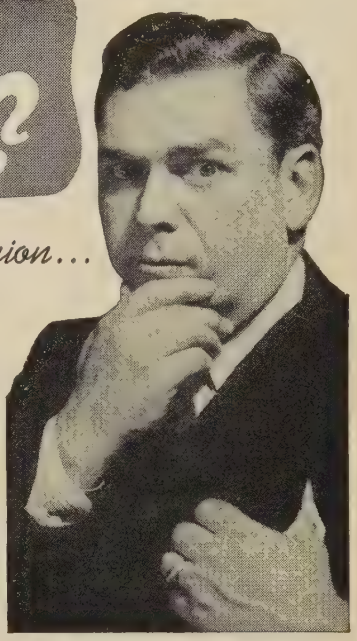

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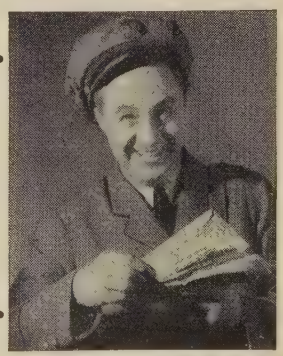

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Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

• *King of Kings*

I HAD just finished putting the title of next Sunday's service on our bulletin board. Proudly it proclaimed the news of what was to happen: WORLD WIDE COMMUNION. It was dusk when I left the church and within three minutes our automatic clock would turn the switch which would illuminate the bulletin board for all to see. As I reached the street I passed two women who were peering over our hedge, trying in the gathering dusk to decipher what I had placed there. Approaching them I heard one woman read slowly but incorrectly, "World . . . Wide . . . Coronation." What a God-inspired misreading that was! Has there ever been a better description of what ought to happen in each church on World Wide Communion Sunday?—*Clair E. Carpenter, Adirondack Community Church, Lake Placid, N. Y.*

• *Battle Standards For Today*

THE Fourth Gospel records how Jesus flung his standards of the action of his Spirit into the midst of a demoralized and God-blaspheming world, very like our own, and bade *us* follow them. Unless we obey, the dark forces around us, hungry now for the very life of humanity, will not be defeated. It is worth while then to recall what those standards of our spiritual warfare are. First, the service of the home, at Cana and everywhere. Second, the service of childhood, beginning with the nobleman's son and then all children in the world. Third, the service of the sick—the man paralyzed for 38 years, and now all sickness and disease in the whole earth. Fourth, the service of the hungry—the five thousand by the lakeside, and now half of humanity. Fifth, the service of the fear-stricken—the disciples in the storm-tossed boat, now all mankind in terror of atomic war. Sixth, the service of the blind: first the one man in the Temple, now all who are blind in body, mind or spirit. Seventh, the service of the death-doomed and the entombed—first Lazarus, now a whole planet bound in circumstances of disaster.—*John S. Hoyland, Society of Friends, Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, England.*

• *Street Lights Or Stars*

WINDING around the outskirts of Duluth is one of the most famous drives of America. This "Skyline Drive," as it is called, affords a wonderful opportunity for studying the street lights or the stars. The drive winds around the hills that stand like silent sentinels guarding the city on the land approach. Across the city on any summer evening you can see the flickering lights of ore boats, hear the signal from the navigator to the engineer of the Lift Bridge and hear the answering signal of either clearance or delay. Across the bay, like a string of jeweled lights, the night beacons of Superior show the busy life of the city. Down below are the checkerboard squares of the busy port of Duluth. You wonder what kind of homes are represented by the lights that shine from the windows. Off to the right the sky is often lighted by the fires from the blast furnace of the steel mill. A continual stream of headlights plays across the docks in this busiest of all inland harbors, while overhead on a summer night is "the silent, silvery beauty of the evening star." How tragic it is when life is only concerned with horizontal living and never pauses either to comprehend the majesty of the stars or to stand in awe before the soul-filling beauty of the heavens. While man may be amazed at the inventive genius of the human race represented by the various lights of teeming industry, he should never forget how to stand in reverence with face uplifted to the matchless splendor of the sky.—*Frank A. Court, St. Paul Methodist, Lincoln, Neb.*

Pulpit Calendar

Sept. 26-Oct. 3—Religious Education Week.
Oct. 3—17th Sunday after Pentecost. World Wide Communion Sunday.
Oct. 10—18th Sunday after Pentecost.
Oct. 17—19th Sunday after Pentecost.
Oct. 24—20th Sunday after Pentecost. World Order Sunday.
Oct. 31—21st Sunday after Pentecost. Reformation Day.
Nov. 1—All Saints' Day.
Nov. 7—22nd Sunday after Pentecost.
Nov. 14—23rd Sunday after Pentecost.
Nov. 21—24th Sunday after Pentecost. Thanksgiving Sunday.
Nov. 25—Thanksgiving Day (U.S.A.)
Nov. 28—Advent Sunday.
Dec. 5—2nd Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 12—3rd Sunday in Advent. Universal Bible Sunday.
Dec. 19—4th Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 25—Christmas.
Dec. 26—1st Sunday after Christmas.
Dec. 31—New Year's Eve.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of national or religious significance.)

• *Symbol or Reality*

IN her book, *Enrico Caruso*, Dorothy Caruso wrote concerning a memorial program given in tribute to the famous singer: "He would have said, 'So kind of them to remember after so long.'" Jesus doubtless would say the same with respect to the symbols we have set up in honor of him—church buildings, crosses, communion tables. But because he knew the inadequacy of symbols and recognized our tendency and temptation in this connection, Jesus gave us one of his most incisive sayings: "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"—*Herschel T. Hamner, First Methodist, Attalla, Ala.*

• *Face the Cross*

METHODIST Bishop Wunderlich of Germany spoke at the Christian worship service during a recent Muslim-Christian convocation in Lebanon. Several Muslim sheiks accepted the invitation to attend. To conclude his address, the bishop recounted his experience in a church in the East zone of Germany. Before he ascended the high pulpit to preach, he was warned by the pastor of the church: "The acoustics of this edifice are terrible, and unless you follow this simple direction your message will not reach the people's ears. As you preach turn neither to the right nor to the left; but face the cross which hangs before you on the far wall, and you will be heard." Good advice for any Christian preacher!—*Dewey R. Eder, American Church, Beirut, Lebanon.*

• *The Christian and World Peace*

THE Christian who has experienced the peace of God which passes all understanding must seek peace among the nations and peoples of the world. The Christian who by faith apprehends the righteousness which God in his mercy has wrought, must in the spirit of brotherhood seek justice for all men. The Christian who has experienced the liberty with which Christ has set men free, must press for a society in which God's children may fulfill the destiny which he has fixed for them. The Christian witness for peace, justice and freedom in God's whole world is on an imperative implication of the Christian gospel.—*O. Frederick Nolde, before the World Council's Second Assembly.*

Books in Brief

★★★AND PEACE AT THE LAST. By **Russell L. Dicks** and **Thomas S. Kepler.** Westminster, $1.50. Because our sermons must speak to all the concerns of the human heart, the minister must never evade discussing the subject of death. This excellent little book says there is a *Christian* way of preparing for death which brings to it dignity and strength. Russell Dicks, using a case study, vividly demonstrates how the pastor can be effective in his ministry to the dying. Mr. Kepler has contributed many seldom-seen writings of value to those who are desirous of facing up to death. This book can be provocative in suggesting new ways by which the preacher can deal with this delicate and often by-passed problem. His people would like to know specifically what the Christian gospel has to say to them about death. But death, like sex, has been hushed up in the churches. It is high time that Christians get better acquainted with death on Christian terms.—*Granger Westberg, Chaplain, University of Chicago Clinics.*

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD; Luther Studies. By **Gordon Rupp.** 375 pages. Philosophical Library, $7.50. Lectures delivered in England, 1947, revised 1951, summarizing modern German and Scandinavian findings in the vast field of Luther research. Part II, over half the book, is a unified essay on Luther's theological development from 1509 until 1521. This is much more than an exercise in historical theology, for Luther himself is quoted so extensively that it becomes a convincing exposition of the Psalms and the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians and Hebrews. Theologically, Rupp aligns himself most nearly with Regin Prenter. Too bad this good book is overpriced.—*Martin Graebner, Pastor to Lutheran Students, The University of Chicago.*

★★THAT IMMORTAL SEA. By **Leslie D. Weatherhead.** 217 pages. Abingdon Press, $2.50. Another fine book from the pen of the pastor of the famous City Temple, London. Not his best writing, but far from his worst, these sermons include a wide range of approach—textual, topical, life situation, psychological. The provocative contents include: "The Advantages of Atheism," "This Haunted World," "The Materialism of Christianity," "The Self We Forget," and "Is Life a Matter of Luck?" Dr. Weatherhead has the knack of challenging us who preach to bring freshness to the presentation of our convictions.—*Kenneth Hildebrand, The Central Church of Chicago.*

★★RURAL PREACHING. By **Edward K. Ziegler.** 158 pages. Revell, $2.00. Despite the limitations of its title, this book offers something good for preachers unlimited. The rural preacher's gospel, Bible, special days, new tools, illustrations and preparation as set forth chapter by chapter are basically for every preacher. At the same time the author distinguishes sharply the particular rural slant which he who would do rural preaching had better understand. Herein the rural ministry is clothed with proper dignity and challenged to its special calling. He who acquires this book will also possess a comprehensive bibliography of 69 volumes on the task of the minister, approximately 20 of which deal specifically with the rural ministry.—*Dwight Putman, United Lutheran, Harrisburg, Pa.*

★★THE PATTERN OF GOD'S TRUTH. By **Frank E. Gaebelein.** 112 pages. Oxford, $2.50. That classy little three-letter prefix *neo* often dances around both orthodoxy and liberalism. This book suggests a new use: *neo*-fundamentalism or, as the author would prefer, *neo*-evangelicalism. Here is an impressive attack on insipid Christian education which stays in a meaningless compartment; and a critique of a pseudo-Christian piety which exalts sanctified stupidity, slap-happy music and bizarre literature. There is a balance which is helpful and a trend in conservative circles which is surprising. The description of Ira Sankey on page 75 is worth the price of the book. Read for other quotes and insight into the newest "neo."—*Don. E. Smucker, Bethany and Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Chicago.*

THE HYMNS OF CHARLES WESLEY. By **R. N. Flew.** 80 pages. Epworth Press, London, and Allenson, Inc., Chicago, $1.75. A critical study of the hymns of the Wesleys, developing the thesis that most of their hymns follow a set pattern: the statement of a theme in the first stanza and its explanation in the subsequent stanzas. Many of these detailed analyses are sermon outlines in themselves. One wonders whether John's sermons inspired Charles's hymns or whether Charles's hymns inspired John's sermons.—*Ernest K. Emurian, Elm Ave. Methodist, Portsmouth, Va.*

LETTERS TO MY DAUGHTER. By **Dagobert D. Runes.** 131 pages. Philosophical Library, $2.50. These letters are impersonal little essays and commentaries on human beings and their ways and thoughts. An occasional flash of wit illuminates an otherwise cloudy prose; tired truisms are propped up with occasional profundities. Runes' pet peeves—modern art and psychoanalysis—come in for their usual clever lambasting. For a sample: "It is good to be alone on occasion. And from the vantage point of loneliness look upon your own life and its many problems. You will find that much which you thought terrifically important has little true meaning and that some of the minor things you neglected rise to great proportions." (Perhaps, in my next solitude, I'll change my opinion of Runes' book.)—*Robert I. Kahn, Temple Emanu El, Houston, Texas.*

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No Star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

August	September	This Month	An analysis based on reports from leading religious booksellers and from the reading of the Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.
7	1	1	**The Christian Hope and the Task of the Church.** *World Council.* Harper, $5.00
	3	2	**The Household of God.** *Lesslie Newbigin.* Friendship Press, $2.75
10	2	3	**Free Churches and Christian Unity.** *Marion J. Bradshaw.* Beacon, $3.50
9	8	4	**Toward Understanding the Bible.** *Georgia Harkness.* Scribner's, $2.50
1	4	5	**I Protest.** *G. Bromley Oxnam.* Harper, $2.50
2	5	6	**The Christian World Mission in Our Day.** *K. S. Latourette.* Harper, $2.50
4	6	7	**Communicating the Gospel.** *Halford E. Luccock.* Harper, $2.50
6	9	8	**Christianity, Diplomacy and War.** *Herbert Butterfield.* Abingdon Press $1.75
5	10	9	**Psychology of Pastoral Care.** *Paul E. Johnson.* Abindgon Press, $4.75
3	7	10	**What Present Day Theologians Are Thinking.** *Daniel D. Williams.* Harper, $2.00

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

AUGUST 1954 has produced an event which transcends month and year and marks a new era in church history. The Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches is at the moment of this writing approaching its final session. The "deadline" for my copy for this page compels me to write without the advantage of perspective and due reflection. What can I say that will still be valid when these words are read? First of all, this Assembly is a revelation of the great distances that separate the geographical units of global Christianity; and therefore of the magnitude of the task which the World Council has undertaken. The two extremes are represented by evangelical Protestantism at one end, and Eastern Orthodoxy at the other. The Orthodox delegation presented a formal statement of their position which frankly claimed that their church was the only true church and that it alone had preserved the true faith through the centuries. Within Protestantism are the less radical but still stubborn differences represented by Anglicanism with its historic episcopate, the Baptists, Disciples and Congregationalists with their theory of congregational polity, Baptists and Disciples with their emphasis on immersion-baptism, and the Lutherans with their stiff emphasis upon their historic confessions. Of the seven larger Protestant bodies, the Presbyterians and Methodists appear to hold a position near the center. But the Assembly is also a heartening revelation of unity. The fact that all accept the evangelical basis of membership in the World Council is itself a commitment to unity which contains dynamic implications. These are bound, in time, to break through all reservations. This promise was illustrated in the several communion services. All, save only the Orthodox and Lutheran, were open to all Christians. At the Methodist service, ministers of fourteen denominations participated as celebrants with Bishop Holt. Full intercommunion is no longer a remote possibility.

World Christianity Meets in Evanston

THERE can be no doubt that the continental theology has captured the Assembly. The subject of the Christian hope, which occupied the entire first week, called forth the most remarkable theological discussion since Nicaea and Chalcedon. In this debate the continental and British scholars swept everything before them, as the formal pronouncements show. The voice of American liberalism was not heard, and the voice of those who attempted to mediate between the two extremes proved to be ineffective in comparison with the formidable case made for the acceptance of the full eschatological conception of the Christian faith and hope. The significance of the preponderance of this interpretation cannot be exaggerated. Whether it represents a rediscovery of the eternal gospel or a temporary reaction under the stress of contemporary suffering, confusion and dread of the future, only time can tell. Is it possible, however, that this world view, held by the first Christians, has broken in upon us because of the religious insolvency of our activistic, moralistic, liberalistic Protestantism? The fact remains that at Evanston there emerged a new outlook upon the world, upon history and upon human destiny. This outlook was so overwhelmingly triumphant that it not only found expression in the pronouncements specifically devoted to its exposition, but penetrated into every other pronouncement of the Assembly. No "humanistic" sentence or phrase was allowed to pass. For years ahead, we shall be engaged in discussing this restoration of the cosmology of the early Christian community. Modern Protestantism has assumed that this cosmology was only the naive, primitive framework in which the gospel was first proclaimed and that, in order to get at the essence of the gospel, this framework had to be discarded. But eschatology now maintains that this framework itself was and is of the essence of the Christian faith.

Theology and the Christian Hope

WHAT effect may we expect from Evanston upon the movement for church union in American Protestantism? I believe that its effect will be to sharpen this movement with fresh determination. It may seem like logical perversity to say that the great variety of unresolved problems presented to the World Council can operate to further our unity. But a discerning mind cannot miss the striking contrast between the picture presented at Evanston and that presented by our American churches. The unity of American Protestantism is simple compared with that of global Christianity. The fellowship of our denominations has become rich and intimate. Our unlikenesses are fast disappearing. Our unities are coming to the fore. If we interpret the preoccupation of the World Council with theological problems as implying that these problems must be resolved as preliminary to a united church, the American churches know that, in their case, this is not true. The obstacles to our unity are not insuperable. The effect of Evanston should be to put new vigor into the movement for the union of Protestantism. Its achievement in America and Canada will spread to every portion of the globe, where Protestantism has now gone.

Evanston and American Protestantism

Charles Clayton Morrison

The Pulpit

For the Record—

WHAT *really* happened at Evanston? During the next few months thousands of ministers will be trying to answer that question with their people. In spite of the most widespread news coverage ever given a religious gathering in the history of the Christian church, the real significance of Evanston will require some additional intellectual labor.

This is not to belittle the unusual coverage given the Assembly during its 17-day period. Western Union officials reported that on the day President Eisenhower delivered the address which is condensed in this issue, they alone sent out nearly 125,000 words. The wire service total for the entire Assembly was more than 1,258,000 words. This included overseas cablegrams totaling over 38,000 words. In addition, thousands of stories were telephoned and airmailed. Nearly 650 accredited reporters and radio and television broadcasters turned out a volume of news on the World Council meeting which was exceeded only by the baseball world series and the national political conventions.

Newspaper Stories Not Enough

This means there is hardly a church member anywhere who has not heard something about the Evanston Assembly. But the hard work of interpreting the Evanston meeting will rest with the ministers of the Council's 163 member bodies.

Fortunately there are tools to help the ministers of the English-speaking world face this responsibility. One such helpful tool is the special World Council Assembly issue of the *Christian Century* which appeared September 22. Here in one document is the essence of the reports, addresses and actions which took place during the entire last half of the month of August.

Special Evanston Issue

This special issue will also serve as a guide for fall study classes and discussion groups. Evanston will be meaningful only in proportion as its deliberations and conclusions are seriously considered by the World Council's 170,000,000 church members. This will require study and interpretation. The Christian Century Foundation is pleased to provide some of the tools for this effort.

Copies of this issue may be secured by writing the Christian Century, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill. They are 20 cents each, five copies for $1.

In addition, The Pulpit will continue to carry both articles and sermons by those who helped to produce Evanston. For November sermons are already on hand from Bishop Lesslie Newbigin of the United Church of South India, Yngve Brilioth, Archbishop of Upsala, and Bishop Eivind Berggrav of Sweden. A.M.M.

The Pulpit

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